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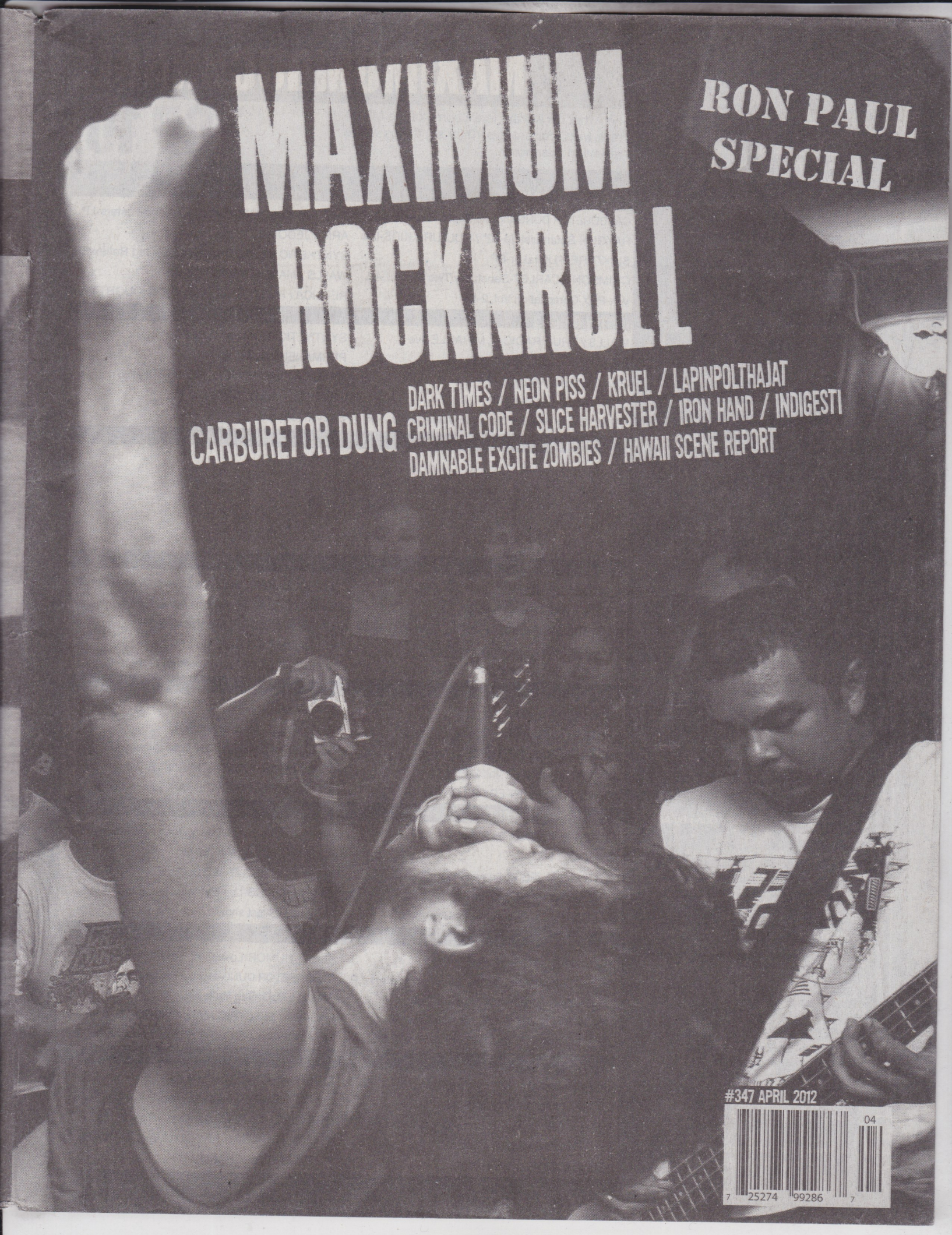

#347 APRIL 2012

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
186-191, 195, 197, 202, 206, 208, 209, 214, 218, 221, 223, 225, 229, 234, 236, 238-247, 249-251, 253-273, 275-306, 308-319, 322-328, 330, 331,333-337, 339-346
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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760

Phone (415) 923-9814
www.maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

- CARBURETOR DUNG-Inginku Rejam Raksasa...-10"
- RAYGUN-Sotamuistoja-12" / CULTURE KIDS-live
- SICK/TIRED-Lifetaker-EP
- CRIMSON SCARLET-Sanctuary/Two Kinds...-45
- V/A-PDX Compilation Vol. 2-EP
- THE PHEROMOANS-Darby, Joan And Fosters-LP
- ARMAGEDOM/TEROKAL-split EP
- SYNTHETIC ID-EP / BRAIN SLUG-Gag Reflex-EP
- WALLS / MANIA / NO STATIK-live
- REPLICA / HYSTERICS / CRUDE THOUGHT-live

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- WALLS / TRUE RADICAL MIRACLE-live
- BRAIN SLUG-Gag Reflex-EP
- SEA OF SHIT-Worn Out-EP
- SICK/TIRED-Lifetaker-EP
- CRIMSON SCARLET-Sanctuary/Two Kinds...-45
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- PERMANENT RUIN-live
- REPLICA / BAD BLOOD / NO STATIK-live
- TEMPE SS / NEO CONS-live
- SALVATION-live

TIM BROOKS

Out to Lunch

MITCH CARDWELL

- ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU-LP
- LOST SOUNDS-Plastic Skin-EP
- BRIGHT IDEAS-Saturdays and the Turning Tide-LP
- SWINGERS-Certain Sounds/Baby-45
- REACTIONS-Saturday's Gone Wild-LP
- BLACK HUMOR-Love God Love One Another-LP
- CONSUMERS-All My Friends Are Dead-LP
- TUMOR WARLORD-Bio-Machine-EP
- FNU RONNIES-Saddle Up-LP
- RANCID HELL SPAWN-Abolition of the...-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- NEON PISS-live and demo
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- MANIA-live / CRUDE THOUGHT-live
- V/A-PDX Compilation Vol. 2-EP
- CRIMSON SCARLET-EP / BRAIN SLUG-EP
- TV FREAKS-LP
- BLUE CROSS-Mass Hysteria-LP
- PEACE OR ANNIHILATION-Fear Culture-LP
- WALLS / TRUE RADICAL MIRACLE-live
- AUTONOMY-demo / YADOKAI-live and demo

SEAN "DOUGIE" DOUGAN

- INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND-45
- TV FREAKS-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE-Leaving Atlantic-CD
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- GUILTY PLEASURES-Summer Strange-LP
- THE PHEROMOANS-Darby, Joan And Fosters-LP
- ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU-LP
- TOTAL CONTROL/THEE OH SEES-split LP
- WARRIOR KIDS-Les Enfants De L'Espoir-LP
- AIRFIX KITS-last show

LAYLA GIBRON

- THE LOST SOUNDS-Plastic Skin-EP
- THE PHEROMOANS-Darby, Joan And Fosters-LP
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- BRILLIANT COLORS / VERONICA FALLS- live
- CRUDE THOUGHT / CULTURE KIDS/HYSTERICS-live
- BLACK HUMOR-Love God, Love One Another-LP
- CARBURETOR DUNG-Inginku Rejam Raksasa...-10"
- BRAIN SLUG-Gag Reflex-EP
- RAS--EP / ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU-LP
- MIKAL CRONIN-EP / THE SHIRLEY MACLAINES-EP

DAN GOETZ

- REPLICA-live
- CRUDE THOUGHT / HYSTERICS-live
- ANCIENT FILTH-Too Young, Fuck Adults-EP
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- HELLSHOCK-Warlord-EP
- BRAINWRECK-side of split EP
- THE CONSUMERS-All My Friends Are Dead-LP
- CRIMSON SCARLET-Sanctuary/Two Kinds...-45
- TUMOR WARLORD-EP / GUILTY PLEASURES-LP
- ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU-LP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER – NEW TOP TEN!!!!!

- SHELLSHAG-Fuck Society Volume 1-LP
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- THE NERVOUS-Genital Panic!-EP
- THE CONSUMERS-All My Friends Are Dead-LP
- THE ONETIMERS-Demo
- THE SECRET PROSTITUTES-Fantasi Di..-EP
- BRIGHT IDEAS-Saturdays And The Turning Tide-LP
- THE REACTIONS-Saturday's Gone Wild-LP
- V/A-PDX Compilation Vol. 2-EP
- NO STATIK-live

KENNY KAOS

- THE GAGGERS-Two Fingers Down My Throat/...-45
- ARTHUR PYM AND THE GORDONS-45
- HEAD ON ELECTRIC-Sleep Slaughter Sheep-LP
- THE INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND-45
- THE STITCHES-Do The Jetset-12"
- LOST SOUNDS-Plastic Skin-EP
- THE SHIRLEY MACLAINES-Want You To Go-EP
- BAZOOKA-Jupiter/Back To You-45
- LES ASPIRATEURS-Le Crimen/La Mer No. 2-45
- THE NERVOUS-Genital Panic!-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- WOOLLEN KITS-LP and live
- THE SHIRLEY MACLAINES-Want You To Go-EP
- TUMOR WARLORD-EP / NOVACK-45
- LES ASPIRATEURS-Le Crime/La Mer No. 2-45
- TOTAL CONTROL/THEE OH SEES-split LP
- USELESS EATERS-EP / THE CONSUMERS-LP
- THE SWINGERS-45 / THE REACTIONS-LP
- LOST SOUNDS-Plastic Skin-EP
- THE MISTREATERS-LP
- CATHOLIC BOYS-Psychic Voodoo Mind Control-LP

RAY LUJAN

- BRIGHT IDEAS-LP / CLASSICS OF LOVE-CD
- CRYPTKEEPER FIVE-The Unbeatable Cry-CD
- FAB MODS-LP / THE GAGGERS-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE-Leaving Atlanta-CD
- THE LOLLIES-CD / A PRETTY MESS-CD
- THE REACTIONS-Saturday's Gone Wild-LP
- RVIVR-THe Joester Sessions-LP
- THE UNRELEASABLES-Crewe Boys-EP
- WARRIOR KIDS-Les Enfants-LP
- AIRFIX KITS / MIDNITE SNAXXX-live

MARISSA MAGIC

- CRUDE THOUGHT / HYSTERICS-live
- FNU RONNIES-Saddle Up-LP
- WHITE LOAD-Waynes World 3 b/w Godfather IV-LP
- LOST SOUNDS-Plastic Skin-EP
- SICK/TIRED-Lifetaker-EP
- AMERICAN SUN-American Sun-EP
- LOOSE GRIP-Cereal-EP
- BRAIN SLUG-Gag Reflex-EP
- THE PHEROMOANS-Darby, Joan And Fosters-LP
- BUCK GOOTER-Consider The Grackles-LP

FRED SCHRUNK

- RVIVR-THe Joester Sessions-LP
- HANNA HIRSCH-Gå Hem över Himlen-LP
- BRIGHT IDEAS-Saturdays and the Turning Tide-LP
- BLANK FIGHT-House Band Feud-LP
- CRIMSON SCARLET-Sanctuary/Two Kinds...-45
- THE SHIRLEY MACLAINES-Want You To Go-EP
- V/A-PDX Compilation Vol. 2-EP
- THE NERVOUS-Genital Panic!-EP
- ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU-LP
- SHELLSHAG-Fuck Society Volume 1-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- V/A-PDX Compilation Vol. 2-EP
- BRAIN SLUG-Gag Reflex-EP
- THE SECRET PROSTITUTES-Fantasi Di...-EP
- SYNTHETIC ID-White Walls-EP
- KONKURSSI-Six Pack-EP
- BLOODY HAMMER-When In Rome-EP
- RAYGUN-Sotamuistoja-12"
- WHITE LOAD-Waynes World 3 b/w Godfather IV-LP
- TV FREAKS-LP
- THE CONSUMERS-All My Friends Are Dead-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *La Ciudad Mas Fea Del Mundo #1*
- *Agony Bag Vol.1*
- *General Speech #3*
- *More Noise #8/Tortura Y Mierda #6-split*
- *Accept The Darkness #8*
- *Subject #2*
- *Slingshot #10*
- *Trust #151 #152*
- *Avow #24, #25*
- *Problems, Dude*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Vakivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post-Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia.

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Gruda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue. with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea.

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore.

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta.

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/ Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker.

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#331/December '10. Kylmä Sota, Articles of Faith, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt Germany Scene Report, Belgium Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, HPP, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Crazy Spirit, Siege. 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/ Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A., '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cokskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise Records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/ Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History pt 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Unlearn, Deaf Club Oral History, Final part of the Czech Punk History.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R, Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor, Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIs, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Bloodkrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary Part 1, Means to an End Fest Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matress Zine.

#345/Febuary '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report pt 2, The Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Barchen Und Die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spikey Jacket, Kromosom tour of Japan, Globsters, Night Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise, Refuse records.

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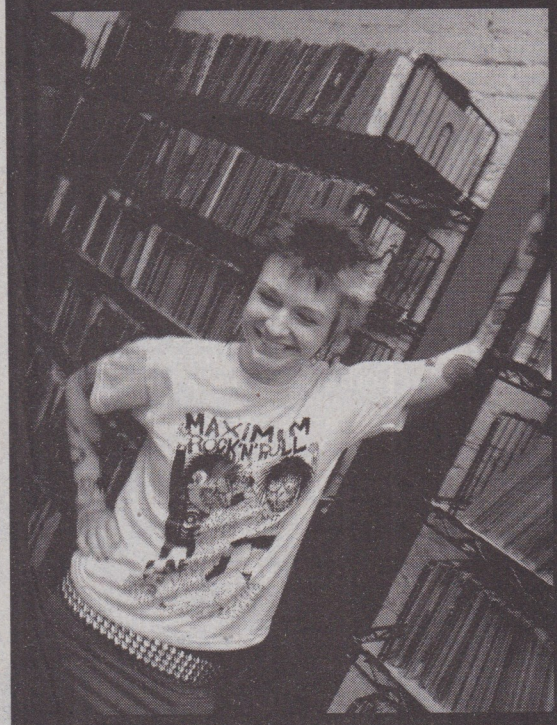

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LETTERS

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Hello MRR and punks—
I am 28 years old and have been a punk since I was thirteen. I have also been HIV positive for over fives years now. This is kind of a coming out for me being public with my status. For the past two years I have been desperately searching for other punks/crust kids who are positive as well. So far I have found no one. I've gone through friends who have tried to help me out by connecting me with their friends and networks to no avail. I've searched the Internet and found nothing but some weird thing about prison. A couple of months back I wrote an anonymous email that was published in this zine and thought for sure I would get a response about someone being positive or maybe a person who knew of some group or something, but there was no response. I felt really demoralized and defeated. After that I did some reflecting and talking to my partner and came to the conclusion that I have to put myself out there—be open with my status so maybe someone would respond.

In the past five years of being positive I have come to feel ok with it but never fully comfortable. Within the punk scene I have had mixed results telling people my status. Most were really supportive to an extent, with some more awkward than others, but these people always had a hard time relating to me and never really talked about my being positive. There were also a few people who fucking suck. In a scene that I love and have been a part of for over half my life, punk can be awesome in a lot of ways and really dysfunctional and ignorant as well. The discussion of HIV, STIs or just harm reduction is not as prevalent as it should be. I feel that in this scene there can be a space for punks who are positive, who can support each other whether it's someone who is newly infected, someone who has been for years, or someone who is HIV negative who wants more information about the virus—a safe place for punks to support each other. I've been to other support groups and not that they suck but I felt so out of place that I couldn't share anything. The only place or scene that I have ever been able to be me is in the punk scene. It's a scene that love and care about, and not to sound cheesy or cliché but it saved my life. I want to have that feeling of comfort with HIV. I think the only way I can achieve this is by combining the two. So if anyone out there is positive or knows punks who are, hit me up anonymously or not. I don't really care about the politics right now (not to say that there not important) but just finding people to talk to. Also no hipster fucks from that fucking trash scene that is slowly creepin in to co-opt punk (Lady Gaga and Lil Wayne wearing crust stuff is not cool). I live in L.A. and this place has become a mecca for these idiots. I don't care if you're crust punk, street punk, queerpunk etc. But hipster trash need not apply.
—Cesar Esparza
Uptheproles36@yahoo.com

Hey Cesar, I just want to say that I hope you get responses and not to be discouraged. What you are doing is taking a big step and even if others aren't ready to do the same, hopefully they will be inspired by you.
—Mariam

Hi there—
I just came across a huge typo in the article I sent you about Greek politics published in *MRR* issue January 2012. At the end I refer to Panagiotis Psomiadis, I in fact intended to write Makis Psomiadis. The former is a politician, or the Salonica region (corrupt as hell too), while the later was owner of Aek FC. Makis was the one I wanted to bash.

I hope all is well with you. Things are starting to really collapse here. I got four days of demos, started today. We've got fake anonymous videos uploaded by right-wingers, got more cuts on pension and wages, got more rises in taxes, but we also have some hope that things might actually erupt. What happens after the dust settles; only time will tell.
Cheers,
—Lydia

Dear MRR—
I've barely picked up *Maximum Rocknroll* since I was a teen in the '80s. Much as *MRR* was an early influence and helped me plug into a vast world outside of the shithole town I lived in, I soon felt the punk religiosity stifling; great music got passed by, endless debates over doctrinal purity trumped the actual music. Reading the February issue, I was struck by how similar the magazine felt, not just in layout (which is practically unchanged) but also in content. Not all was the same, though. Like the festering PVC shit bucket in a crummy punk squat, Mykel Board's writing has only gotten more pungent with time.

Board positions himself as an antidote to boring punk orthodoxy, a shot of toxic dope for the toothless dupes. Board's not some mere contrarian—that would be too tame. He won't just point out the discrepancy in outrage over the Penn State/Jerry Sandusky child-molestation scandal (universally condemned) and that of the young workers stuck in slave-labor conditions in Apple's Foxconn factories (pitifully undercovered). No, Board is so transgressive he actually defends the actions of accused child molester Jerry Sandusky!

Sandusky was merely engaged, Board tells us, in "things like snapping towels." He mentions a janitor who reported seeing "something lewd in a college locker room shower." The brilliant scribe doesn't bother to list any of the actual accusations brought against Sandusky, as outlined in the case's Grand Jury report. Take the assertions of a Penn grad student, who claimed to witness a boy "whose age he estimated to be ten years old, with his hands up against the wall, being subjected to anal intercourse by a naked Sandusky." The report is full of similar descriptions, mostly involving boys between eight and twelve years old. One of the real tragedies of the case is that the kids were poached from a charity the accused molester set up, ostensibly to help poor kids from broken homes. Board trivializes this as "seven young guys who may or may not have fucked a football coach....Which is worse?" he asks, "Sex or death?"

Forget for a moment that forcible buggering of ten-year olds doesn't constitute "sex." The false dichotomy of "sex" or death has all the complexity of a *New York Post* editorial. You're with us, or against us. On one side, there's Board, crusader of freedom. Across the ring, we've got the American Taliban, represented on the right by Rick Santorum, and on the left, by sexless prudes. This shows the worst contempt for one's readers.

Not content with misrepresenting the story, Board takes it into yecch territory: "The grey-haired man lowers his buck-toothed mouth over the boy's crotch..." It gets worse. Much worse. Even after his kiddy diddling descriptions, Board speculates things still might've been innocuous: "it could've been nothing more than sharing a shower." Hey, who doesn't shower with prepubescent kids?

Board's pedophiliac prose is the type of icky shit you might expect to find in the NAMBLA Newsletter. Later in his column, he puts that indefensible group in the company of the ACLU and the National Coalition Against Censorship. The NAMBLA reference comes right above Board's slimy solicitation for *MRR*'s (presumably young) readers to send him homemade porn.

For someone harping on the obscene amount of media coverage given to the Sandusky case—one of the most covered cases of last year—Board seems to not have bothered to acquaint himself with the basic details of the case. Or is he deliberately omitting the details to push his pro-pedophile bullshit?

"Excuse me while I puke. Did the kids complain? Was there an injury? A visit to a doctor? Where's the crime?" This is the type of absurd denial rape victims face all the time—no doctor was called, she must've enjoyed it. For what it's worth, all of Sandusky's alleged victims are lining up to testify. Complaints were filed early on, most notably by one boy, and another boy's mother. The reason this became such a scandal is that the complaints were ignored. Board mocks the fact that Sandusky was charged with "seven counts of involuntary deviate sexual intercourse." As of early December, Sandusky was actually charged with over 50 charges, many of various degrees of child sexual abuse. If the alleged victims had been Penn State students—young adults—that would've been another. The alleged victims in this case were kids.

Board doesn't just obfuscate the facts, he tries to pass off his stealth NAMBLA agenda as a big joke.

He quips that a punk album "gives me a hard on! Quick find me a locker room in Pennsylvania." Scratch the surface a bit, and you'll see that he's not really joking. It takes about one minute of googling to find MB's pro-pedophilia views—less time then it does to parse the basics of the Sandusky case. Over the years, while *MRR* has been engaging in excessive policing of what is and isn't punk, Board has been taking advantage of the lack of basic accountability in the punk milieu. He does what all of the pedo-apologists do, couching the skeeziness in rhetoric about "kid's rights." "I'm a supporter of kids' rights. I believe people should be allowed to fuck whatever consenting people they want. Kids are the world's captives." Sexual expression of youth, among youth is one thing. Writers like Paul Goodman and Wilhelm Reich gave the issue much attention. That's not what Board is talking about. On a loosening of consent laws in some states: "That's a good first step...Like the creationists who use Intelligent Design to get a foot in the education door, I'll use the three year plan to get a foot in the child sexuality door. Also like the creationists, I don't want to stop there..."

Consider the following zinger, where Board writes of a trip to Thailand: "Dad holds their baby girl...Putting his face between the little girl's legs, he BRRRRRRs against her tiny sex."

He's big into this stuff. You can dig up the review of his book that quotes his sexualization of a six-year old girl, with a "flirty walk that makes it easier to understand pedophilia." Or read his defenses of kiddie porn: "In the stuff that I've seen in Europe and Asia, the kids look pretty happy... like they're playing." He's ecstatic, this stuff seems to set his creaky butthole aflutter. There are examples enough to gag on for days. Look them up yourself, if you can stomach it.

Older guys who attach themselves to youthful subcultures have always given me the creeps. How old is Mykel Board, sixty-something? How old is the average *MRR* reader, teenaged, twenty-something at best?

Punk kiddies, be warned. If you see Board, at an all-ages show at ABC-No-Rio, lurking by the slam pit—or at, say, a bris—keep an eye out. This ardent champion of your rights might try to liberate you. Sex or death, right? Mykel Board writes with the clammy hand of the trench-coat perv. With his column you get mouth-breathing lechery, the tepid sex of the deathly bore.

—Rico Cleffi, Brooklyn, NY

Dear MRR—

I am writing in response to Mykel Board's column in *Maximum Rocknroll* #345. I appreciate Board as a clever storyteller, a cogent writer and... I don't know... maybe even a talented musician. I suspect he is a very nice person. But I find Board's writings on the topic of child sex totally disturbing. Most recently, Board wrote a column which had as its thesis, and I don't think I'm exaggerating, Board's personal belief that there is nothing wrong with a 50 year old man having sex with an 10 year old boy. ("Where's the crime?" says Board.) In addition, some months prior Board wrote a marginal defense of child pornography, stating that most child pornography he has seen is "old" and the kids in it "seem happy." Look, I get it; Board is a gadfly, a contrarian, a libertine, and he does not believe in an age of consent. But while he may be aiming for "provocative" or even "offensive" with his writing, when it comes to child sex, he is landing with a thud on "creepy." Although he recognizes such concepts in other areas, for instance in regards to workers' rights, when it comes to children and sex Board seems incapable of appreciating the inequalities of power, the impact of coercion, or the possibility of lasting psychological harm. I am surprised he is afforded such nonchalance in these pages on such issues, particularly when a good portion of every *MRR* is dedicated to illuminating exploitation, oppression and moral bankruptcy among those in positions of power and authority (generally corporate or governmental entities). When it comes to children, adults are the ones in positions of power and authority. Thus, to me, those who would condone adult sex with children are condoning exploitation, oppression and moral bankruptcy. That's not very punk.

Sincerely,

—Matt Reynolds

Mykel Board doesn't believe in responding to the letters in this section, but he does address them in his column... So this is what Mykel wants us to say when he receives a complaint about his column. What I would like to say is that I wish we hadn't run this column. While I do enjoy a lot of Mykel's columns, this is one that I can't defend. I know what he was trying to do, but it didn't work and for many of us, the subject of abuse is not one to joke about even in the persuit to make a valid point about injustice. No doubt Mykel will respond to your letter, but I wanted to respond myself.

—Mariam

Hey y'all—

In your most recent issue, the review for Nazi Dust's *Wretched Hour* 12" states it is already out of print. This is not true, nor has it been true at any point since the record came out. I know your reviewers do not get paid, but please ask them to put a little more effort into what they put in print. The record will stay in print indefinitely. Please print this, or some version of this, in your letters section. Thanks a ton!! I'll send an ad for the aforementioned 12" soon.

—Daniel
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AH! That review shit was my fault!! I totally believed the hype! I fact check everything, but I totally fell for nerd board and punk rumor. Sorry about that. I hope that it didn't fuck up anything for you or the ND dudes. The record is a jam! Totally kneeing before the Vinyl Rites sword!

—Mariam

Hello MRR—

I am writing this letter to bring to the attention of the worldwide DIY community something that has affected everyone in my hometown's scene immensely. On Friday February third, 2012, the local venue I volunteer at, The Bel Tower, in Fresno, California had one of our largest shows on record, a one dollar show featuring the best up and coming local bands from all over Central California called Doll Hair Fest. It was part of a series of shows that was started by two brothers who wanted to bring more people into the local scene and was a huge success that everybody in town was talking about. We produced a video interviewing staff, band members, promoters and showgoers as part of a fundraising campaign on Indieagogo to bring attention to our venue and what we have done for the community. This very same night the Fresno PD showed up with three officers, one was specifically assigned by the Fresno PD to monitor, watch and make it is life to get the Bel Tower shut down. After finding no alcohol or illegal activity, they resorted to shutting down the show because we do not have any permits or a business license.

The week before we had been contacted by the Fresno Fire Department about getting inspected to bring our building up to code. The same day we received this news a local musician, promoter and friend was killed in a tragic automobile accident in her hometown of Hanford, just south of Fresno. Her name was Ariel Gieseman and she was only twenty years old. We had scheduled a benefit show for her and now that is in jeopardy as well. She was a huge member of our community and loved the Bel Tower and like all of us it was a second home to her. This tragedy served to bring everyone in the local scene much closer together.

It seems like it has been one thing after another these past couple of weeks and we have no idea what the future holds. But we have been doing everything we can do to save our home. The venue is on the corner of Belmont Ave and Weber Ave in the southern part of Fresno. This area has been neglected for decades. Around the corner from us is a hotel where child prostitution, drugs, murder and all sorts of illegal and horrific activities have taken place for years and the police have instead turned their attention to a place that has done a positive thing for the community and been a safe place for at-risk youth in our community to go and have a place to express themselves and enjoy the best in local live music. We have hosted touring bands from all corners of the earth and these bands have had nothing but amazing things to say about us and what we do. We are entirely run by members of the local scene and have been in business since October of 2010 without a problem. What started out as a glorified party house that was filled with drugs, alcohol and destruction has grown and changed to become a safe place for everybody to go and watch their favorite bands, touring and local. Since it opened its doors, the Bel Tower has been a catalyst for revitalization of the Belmont area, which politicians have attempted to do with the entire southern part of town for years through attempting to bring in corporate investment and big box stores and other projects which have always been funded by big money and have always failed. Our small hole-in-the-wall punk rock club has done more for this city than millions of dollars that have been wasted on shitty projects that never get off the ground and only serve to line the pockets of the developers who run the city council. The Bel Tower, along with the two other DIY venues in Fresno, Chinatown Youth Center and CAFE Info Shop have been offering great things for the youth of the southern half of Fresno which has been neglected, mistreated, and in general tormented by the police, city government and big business. We are helping to bring back a forgotten part of our city and you can see it in the streets, you can hear it in the voices of the owners of the surrounding local business owners. The entire town was against us, ask somebody on the street about the Bel Tower and the response is usually "oh you cant drink there why would anybody want to play there?" or "yeah I've heard of that place, its a hole in the wall in a seedy part of town." Yet nobody who actually goes there ever has a complaint. When they actually see what we are doing here they can see it in the spirits of everybody involved that this is truly a special place. There is a distinct "Bel Tower culture" that permeates every

aspect of everybody who spends their time there. There is truly a distinct "Bel Tower sound" that comes through in all of the bands that call this place their home. We love our venue with all our hearts and it is the only place that keeps most of us sober, off the streets or just plain keeps us sane. For me personally it is literally one of the only things keeping me alive and has turned my life around in ways I cannot explain.

We are in danger of losing this place forever and lack the funds and support to become compliant with the city on our own. We have cancelled or moved all of our upcoming shows until further notice and are holding benefit shows at the other DIY venues in Fresno which have shown us considerable support. We have been circulating an online petition for everybody to sign and within one day we got over 350 signatures. Pretty impressive for a venue that holds maximum of 150 people. The petition can be found at: www.petitionbuzz.com/petitions/savebeltowerfresno I am urging all *MRR* readers and staff to go sign it for us and if anybody has anything they can do to help us, be it sending us new zines for our zine library, cash donations, legal advice, connections to anybody who could help us, or just in general kind words of moral support and encouragement it would be greatly appreciated. The video we have produced can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQma0luOQ68 we urge everyone who has access to the internet to please share this with everybody you know. We feel like it is truly us against the world. We are in a forgotten part of town in a forgotten region of California that has suffered greater from the economic downturn than any other region in the United States. The Bel Tower is truly all some of us have to call our own. We are reaching out to anybody who can hear our voice.

We at the Bel Tower say: "Bury me on Belmont & Weber" and we mean that. If this place dies, we die with it. We are fighting this until the last man. Even if they take us out in handcuffs we will return. We just need as much help as we can get and personally, I would like to show to the people of Fresno, who culturally are predisposed to defeatism and being easily discouraged, that we are loved and respected by the DIY punk community worldwide.

Best regards,
—Garth Clifton
Fresno, Calfornia

Please keep us updated as to what is going on. We will see what we can do on our end.
—Mariam

[redacted]

Dear MRR—
I almost choked on my cornflakes when I turned to the Night Birds interview in the March issue of *MRR* the other morning. Imagine my surprise to see that it was conducted by none other than millionaire former record exec Larry Livermore. For younger readers or those new to the magazine, Larry worked at *MRR* and wrote a widely-read column for many years, before leaving in protest after Tim Yohannan fired Jeff Bale. He went on to support and write for Punk Planet, a magazine which spent much of its thirteen-year run attacking *Maximum Rocknroll* and criticizing Tim Yohannan.

In Larry's words, from his last Punk Planet column: "while it (*MRR*) portrayed itself as a voice for the entire community, it was Tim and Tim only who wielded ultimate power. If you crossed him or strayed from his ideological perspective, you could become an Orwell-style unperson."

Tim and Larry's relationship was complex to say the least; they definitely started out as friends. But throughout the nineties and up until Tim's death they feuded over their differences in approach to so-called "punk business." I'm sure that by now, time and age might have smoothed over some of the cracks in their relationship, but since Tim died before that could happen, it seems in bad taste for Larry to contribute to the magazine.

I don't expect the current coordinators to remember every beef that Tim had with someone during his time running MRR (the list could fill a phone book), I'm just more surprised that Larry had the gall to think that this would be OK. For some, seeing Larry's name in the "Contributor" column of the masthead is an insult to Tim's memory.

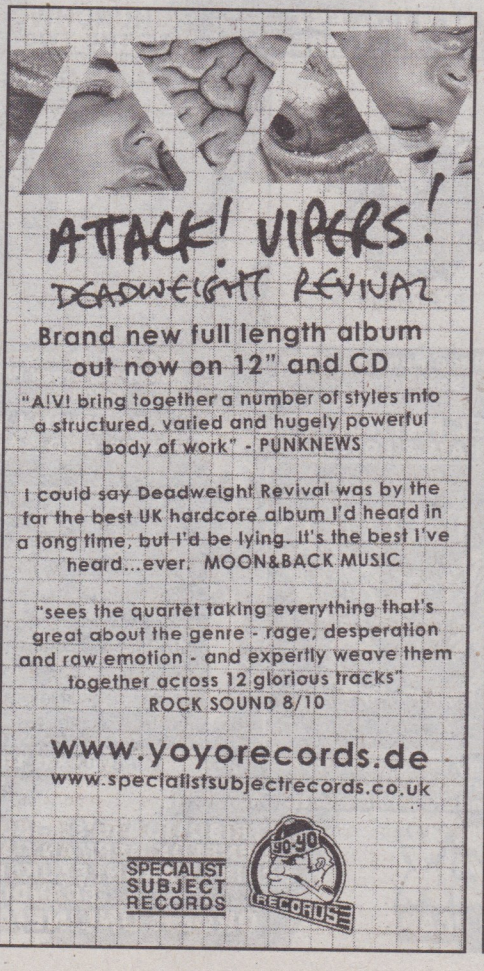
Thanks,
—Allan McNaughton
Oakland, CA

[redacted]

Hi MRR—
In issue #342, my email address for LAZARUS TAXA demo was incorrect. The right address is: desordre.ordonne@hotmail.com

I also forgot to mention that the tapes are $4 ppd in the USA. This band does not exist anymore but you should check Jake's new band called Hollow Earth. (Hollow.earth.bandcamp.com)

Thanx,
—A friendly French Canadian



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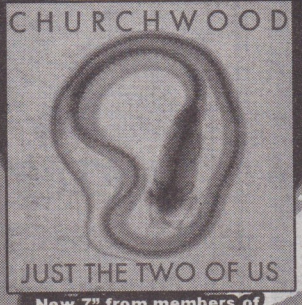

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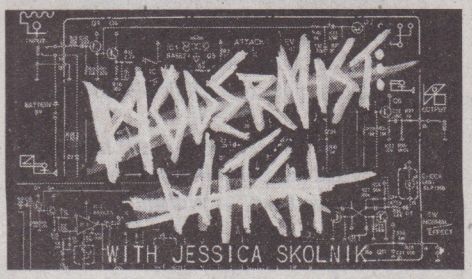


Get in the (Rental) Van

Two days ago, I got back from a short, ten-day tour with my band. We did most of the dates with Shoppers, who many of you know because they're a killer live band, the best people, *and* they put out one of the records of the year last year. Yeah, I'm bragging a little. It was a real treat to do a short tour with them, and hopefully someday we'll be able to do a longer one together. We make a pretty good pairing, Shoppers and Population. Poppers. Shoppulation.

A lot of you are familiar with Tour World/Tour Brain, having been there yourselves. The nature of how we experience time seems to change, because you're either in transition, playing a show, figuring out how to get basic human amenities (none of which you get enough of)—there is something perpetually cyclical about it even though you're in a different town every day. Since all of the members of my band are tethered to work and other responsibilities, we're generally only able to do short jaunts like the one we were just on (I would really like to go west and/or overseas, though, if we get the chance — I think we all would). We were just starting to tighten up at ten days; we were starting to roar through a set without many stops or adjustments. We were just starting to hit our stride. (Not that I didn't miss the shit out of Home and my partner and our furballs.)

Tour World/Tour Brain isn't particularly kind to introverts like me. There's the lack of privacy thing, of course, and the fact that my anxiety level goes through the roof when I don't have some alone time/downtime to process things (long walks in the morning and having my headphones on/eyes closed in the van — or driving — are good remedies for this, I suppose). More troublesome is the fact that it's hard to spend quality time with anyone on tour. There's the rare moment with your bandmates or with anyone else you happen to see every day, or a brief connection with a stranger or an old friend, but the fact that your life for the moment is so transitory and can feel so overwhelming when you have a lot of things to do and/or people to talk to. When we were in Brooklyn and Boston there were about 800 old friends around that I wanted to spend real quality time with and I knew that I couldn't, especially because I was also worn down and sick (we all got the same stupid cold/sinus thing, which was also just starting to clear as we headed home).

Also, I had an ovarian cyst rupture while I was playing a show this time, and it was … something else. I was debating whether to share the details in these pages, and I won't go into it in depth because it was a particularly weird and vulnerable moment for me, but it was the biggest show we'd played all tour and we were about halfway through the set and all of a sudden I was in so much pain that my vision actually blurred/blacked out for a second. This has happened to me twice before in my life. A friend of mine said another friend related her own experience with such pain as "feeling like being shot," and while I've never been shot so I can't really compare, I'd imagine that it's not an inaccurate analogy. It's never happened to me in public before, let alone on stage with a couple hundred people staring at me. I didn't know what to do and was trying not to vomit all over my synths because the pain was so acute, so I just summoned all my toughness and stumbled through the rest of the set as best I could. Apparently I did an OK job of it. Post-pain reaction adrenaline is a pretty intense motivator. Afterwards, I packed up as quickly as I could and then ran into the bathroom and lay on the floor for as long as I could. I was thankful to have good friends around who took care of me afterwards. (Thankfully, I didn't have to go to the hospital, and I'm fine now.)

Then there's the loneliness. The lack of everyday comforts—and I'm not even necessarily talking physical comforts here, but I am a person who likes to nest and stretch out, figuratively, in a space where she is psychically comfortable—exacerbates it. There's this weird experience that you're having and it's hard to communicate it to the few people in your life that you don't have to translate yourself or your experiences for (us introverts can love a lot of people but we don't truly bond to many). There are these long hours spent in a van that is neither here nor there. No time to really explore the places you go beyond maybe food and record shopping (not that those aren't two things I love). Once you figure out your balance, you're on to the next place and it's upset again. There's the loneliness.

The thing about touring is that I don't ever want to stop doing it, despite medical problems, despite the loneliness, despite the anxiety. There is something really exhilarating and rewarding about the privilege of playing music you love and are proud of every night for people. I particularly kind of like the fact that this band isn't for everyone. We're not aiming to please anyone except ourselves and anyone else who might happen to like us, and that is just fine with me (even if it means that sometimes we play really weird bills, shows where most of the crowd has a slightly befuddled "why am I watching this/why is this happening?" look on their faces). I wouldn't want to make music or art of any kind at this point in my life for any other reason. This isn't a career for me, it never will be, and I honestly never want it to be (if you are one of the few people who figured out how to make your living this way, kudos to you, it's just not the right model for me for a large number of reasons).

This tour I didn't encounter *one single person* (in the punk community, that is) who condescended to me or made me feel like I had to compete or that I was inadequate or weird or different because of my gender. That was really cool and the first time that's ever happened to me in fifteen-plus years of playing music and sometimes travelling to play music. Keep it up, people. Keep it up, world.

I met a lot of sweethearts. Some of you might be reading this. Hi, if you are.

We didn't bicker a lot as a band, which is rare and extremely awesome. Yeah, there's the usual strong personalities clashing, but on the whole we've figured out how to make it work; most of us have extremely strong personalities and perspectives, and in two years of being a family we've figured out how to negotiate those so that we can spend a week or more in a van without things coming to blows.

And again, I'm so stoked on the music we're writing lately that it's been a pleasure to explore those new songs in new settings. There were some songs I was adjusting my parts to little by little every night, experimenting with sounds or rhythms, adding in an extra note here or there. Having the space to work that out live is an unbelievable gift.

So now I'm trying to get back in the saddle of everyday life, and my brain hasn't quite caught up with me. Work is intense (especially after ten days away), there's a cat snoozing with her head on my knee as I write this, my partner is at his own band practice and I need to make some lentil soup & potato pancakes for late dinner. I've got some books to read and some records to listen to, and my body isn't causing me incredible pain any longer. Thanks for indulging me the space to work out a complex but incredibly mundane experience.

One quick gear thing: I'm just starting to gather materials for my first ground-up amp build. If anyone has experience building from scratch, let me know. I have a feeling I'm going to be tweaking this thing for a while. (It's a Vox AC30 clone; I have the schematics and everything and it doesn't seem like it's going to be that hard to assemble, but I've said that about projects before and ended up with problems it takes me months to work out.)

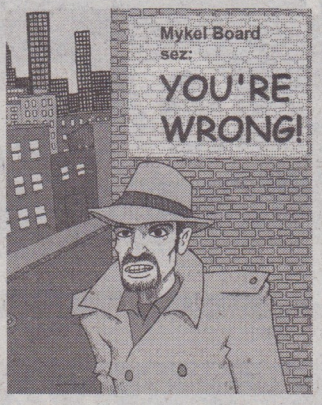
You can reach me as always at modernistwitch@gmail.com.

After writing about all those reissues last month, I came to realize an important, inalienable truth. Listening to old bands fills me with the kind of euphoric stupor that helps me stomach the sight of my face when I look in the mirror. The '60s-'80s were filled with so much more vitality and importance that it's almost laughable that anybody would even think that creating something with vitality in the 21st century is plausible. You are all a bunch of fucking fools. The aforementioned time period was filled with political unrest, people standing up for themselves, banding together with one another, and making something important, reacting against all the oppression and corruption and stuff. People stood up for themselves and stood up for change; people don't do that anymore. What is wrong with everyone? Sometimes I think I was born 30-40 years too late.

Everything is so meaningless now, people don't stand for anything, and they just sit around without any solutions. The people standing up to Reagan and the wars and everything, they had solutions. The music actually *said* something. Nobody does that anymore. Everything I read and hear from this god-awful modern age is filled with self-criticism and boring shit like that. I don't wanna read about that, I don't care, I want someone to stand up and talk about all the oppression, how all these bad people are making it bad for free thinkers like *me*. There's no modern voice for us, the old days, they had Bob Dylan, they had the Sex Pistols, they had Minor Threat and Crass! What do we have? Fucking nothing! Who's gonna be the most memorable author, artist, or band from our time? Who are the kids of 2040 gonna look up to and talk about how they revolutionized things? Where's our *Nineteen Eighty-Four*!? Where's our Summer of Love? Where's our Dischord or SST?

I mean it's rather plausible that nobody cool would have to stand up for anything anymore, because with the internet now you can access all this great old stuff and think about how what they're doing is truly inspirational. I find myself doing this a lot. When I'm not spending time flicking my fingers across the touchscreen of my iPad to jerk off violently to exotic and inventive pornography, I can search for old one-off practice tapes of Finnish proto-grind-fastcore from 1983 and think about how great things used to be. In fact, I should let this manifest in my column. Here it is, here we go. From now on, this "Mutant Rock" column is all dedicated to searching the internet—anywhere from Mediafire to eBay—to finding great old music from the times when people were all about protest and having something real to say, not any of this "self-criticism" bullshit. Who needs reality when you can make grandiose statements about things you don't know about? Out with the new and in with the old! If only I was born earlier, I could have experienced this all and I could have been part of the chorus of voices of such a formative, vital time. Now there's nothing to do but to preserve that time period and make sure nobody ever forgets about it.

P.S. The only new record worth hearing is BROWN SUGAR's (Now the BROWN SUGAR EXPERIENCE) new double LP called *Are you Experienced?* They cover old '60s folk and psychedelic rock 'n' roll but re-work the lyrics to talk about Manson! Check out the new single on Pitchfork, it's a real rockin' foot tapper called "I Put a Spell on You"! Check this quote—"it sounds tender and sweet and smooth like someone took Vaseline and rubbed it on my face." Awesome!



"You can tell how punk somebody is by how often they go to the post office." —Kyle Nooneman

"To see a world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower Hold infinity in the palms of your hand and eternity in an hour." —William Blake

Almost every month, I complain about the internet. Perhaps, though, like Blake's grain of sand, the world is contained somewhere in anything, even Facebook. Right now, I'm reading the Facebook group "Old School Hardcore Kids." It starts me on the path to this column. Let's look at what it says.

From one post to another, when it's not YouTube videos of Agnostic Front, it's debate about what's *real* hardcore. On Facebook and in this zine... One month after the next... Letters columns and reviews... some debate rages... if not hardcore... at least punk. What is it? Who is it? And most importantly, who it is *not*? This column will settle that.

First... as you know from the myriad of editorials, letters to the editor, interview comments... if you allow your song to be used on anything that has *corporate* connections. *IT'S NOT HARDCORE.*

THE SCENE: Tom Vomit is in a crisis. He's been offered a job as a designer in the mega-evil ad agency, Ad Boosters. Tons of cash. The only problem: he has to make an ad for Wal-Mart, the most evil corp of corpAmerica. He has one way out.

His band, the Decolators, has a song that Toyota wants. If he sells the rights to that song, he and his band mates can live from the royalties. He won't have to take a job whoring himself to the corporatocracy. He can live from his music... his dream since he was a 14-year old punk rocker listening to Green Day. Music or evil corporate hell? What does he choose? He chooses music...and gets thrown out of the punkrock club because of it.

Get it Tom? It wouldn't matter if you got *nothing* from the song or if it's a benefit to save French anarchist bombers from the guillotine. If it's got a corporate logo™ on it, it ain't punk—and neither are you!

Of course, that doesn't go far enough. No matter how macho, shirtless, ripped the picture on the cover is, if the music is poppy, danceable (rather than moshable), or if it

makes you smile and not grit your teeth and clench your fist. *IT'S NOT HARDCORE*!

THERE'S MORE: no matter how nasty it sounds, if the musicians look like dorks... if the singer has glasses... or the cover shows a bunch of cute guys in Hawaiian shirts and porkpie hats... It is soft! *IT'S NOT HARDCORE!*

FLASHBACK. It's 1986: I'm in Bleecker Bob's... fishing through the *cheap punk* bin. At the next milk crate is Fairly Mulligan, bass player for the hardest band in New York: the Neanderthals. I pull a record from the case and show it to him. It's from 1982, a band called the Ancestors. I heard a lot about them, but never actually *heard* them. On the cover is a drawing of a guy in glasses wearing a tie. The name of the LP is *Filo Goes For An MBA*. I show it to Fairly.

"Waddaya thinka this?" I ask him. "I heard of 'em but I don't know 'em."

Fairly looks at the LP and just about spits.

"It's shit!" he says. "You can't be HARDcore and wear glasses... and a fuckin' tie? Are you kidding? Somebody should kill that guy."

I put the record back.

Flash ahead to 1993: It's GG's notorious last show, at the Gas Station in New York. Everybody knows about it. The chaos, the shit-slinging, the fatal aftermath. But what everybody *doesn't* know is what happened after the show... at the Mars Bar (RIP). The scummiest bar in New York. It somehow managed to last well into this century. I've been there with Ivan Merma and Gilberto... post WTC. In 1993, you took your life... or at least your balls... in your hand when you went into the place.

Several of us refugees from the GG show go there to have a few drinks to recover from what we saw. I walk into the bathroom, enter a stall, sit on the toilet and remove GG's shit from my jacket. I use the corner of my wallet to scrape. Then I wrap each stinky brown piece in a paper napkin. My plan is to sell the wrapped GG shit for $5... in front of CBs at the next hardcore matinee.

As I scrape, the door thumps. At first, I think someone's knocking to get in, but the door doesn't lock... just open it and come on in. Then there are more thumps, on the door... outside... everywhere. Only one thing sounds like breaking wood. That is *breaking wood*. I hear that sound. I also hear some groans... some *"motherfucker!"* Gunshots do not come, but they wouldn't surprise me.

A lull in the smashing, bashing, breaking, crashing, tumbling... I push the door open... slightly... The bar looks like the aftermath of a mafia hit. The back mirror is shattered... shards hang at odd angles... most of it on the floor and bartop. Not one stool is vertical... few are in one piece. On the floor, from my vantage point, I see the leather clad arm of someone whose body I can't see... the hand holds a half-shattered bottle of Olde English 800. Blood puddles on the floor under that hand.

I stick my head out a littler further. There on the bartop, in a grey hooded sweatshirt, unzipped, is K Rappo, singer for one of the hardest bands in NY: Young People Now.

"Them walls are broke down, huh?" he says when he sees me crawling out of the bathroom.

"Waddaya mean?" I ask.

"GG ain't so tough," he answers. "He says drink, fight, and fuck? Hah, he's got it wrong. Hardcore is not about drinking or fucking. It's *the fight*. Listen, Mykel, get this straight. *YOU ARE NOT HARDCORE IF YOU DON'T FIGHT."*

FLASH AHEAD A WEEK: The Neanderthals are playing A7. They've broken up and gotten back together more times than a Hollywood couple. Great show, but that's not the important point. *After* the show, I see Fairly Mulligan in the corner, breathing hard... showing off his chest. He spots me and waves.

"Hey Mykel," he says. "I got something for you."

Grabbing my hand, he pulls me into the A7 bathroom.

Now, I've been thirsting for his glutei maximi since I first saw him as a drummer for The Motivaters in 1980. Is he finally going to give up that anal hymen? My hopes rise like my penis when he pushes open a stall door. But then something strange happens. Instead of dropping trou and bending over, he pushes on the back wall of the stall. It moves and we enter a secret room.

It's dark. Before my eyes adjust I see nothing. A sound comes through the blackness... like a muffled pigeon chirp... or the struggling screams of someone whose mouth is duct-taped shut. Bingo!

As my eyes adjust, I make out a platform in the middle of the dark room. Tied down to that platform — a limb stretched toward each corner — is what looks like a naked white boy wearing black-rimmed glasses. It *is* a naked white boy wearing black-rimmed glasses. It's Filo Zuckerman, singer from The Ancestors.

"See him?" asks Fairly... as if I could miss him. "He thinks he's hardcore. No tattoos and the songs? Titles like "You're the One" and "Silly Girl." Nothing about unity or the crew or America. Just love songs... and he calls himself hardcore?"

Something glints in Fairly's hand. I just see a faint flash before I realize that it's a pocket switchblade now plunged into the chest of the boy on the platform. It must have hit a vein, because blood spurts like a geyser... covering Fairly's face and chest.

Stabbing is not enough. Fairly slices downward and then flings the knife aside. With both hands he reaches into the slit and pulls out Filo's still beating heart. I can barely keep from fainting at the gore. Fairly leans over the pulsating cardiac, I watch him take a deep bite. It seems to explode as the blood-engorged organ spews red everywhere.

Chewing, then swallowing, Fairly looks at me. His face covered in blood like a kid's face... covered in blueberries after a pie-eating contest, Fairly looks at me and smiles.

"Mykel," he says. "You're not *hardcore* until you've eaten human flesh."

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or blog viewers (mykelsblog.blogspot.com/) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column]

-->*Apology dept:* I don't answer letters in the letter section. That section belongs to the readers. I have this column. It's not fair if I have the last word both places. Here, I want to answer a letter and to apologize for an error. I quoted Ron Paul on Muammar Qhaddaffi. Though the quote was from the Ron Paul website, Ron did not actually write it. I missed that. Still, written by RP or not, the quote is correct in its analysis of why that great Libyan was killed.

-->*Oh that again dept:* Another letter was about my column comparing a coach's sex with some kids to Apple/Steve Job's exploitation of thousands of Chinese workers, including several who committed suicides because they couldn't take the pressure. I asked why the former got all the press and attention while the latter was clearly more evil.

The *MRR* letter *only* attacked my "belief that there is nothing wrong with a 50-year old man having sex with an 10-year old boy." It made no mention of the Apple-caused deaths. I guess it proved my point.

-->*It's not as bad as you thought dept: This Week Magazine* reports that the break of the "housing bubble" is not what it seems. While homes valued under $1 million have fallen an average of 1.5 percent in value over the last year, fear not. Homes valued *over* $1 million dollars have risen 0.7 percent in the same time. Says real estate economist Stan Humphries, "Luxury is the best-performing segment of the housing market right now."

-->But they can watch us dept: The Freeman website reports that: In at least three states (Illinois, Massachusetts, and Maryland), it is now illegal to record an on-duty police officer even if the encounter involves you and may be necessary to your defense, and even if the recording is on a public street where no expectation of privacy exists.

The legal justification for arresting the "shooter" rests on existing wiretapping or eavesdropping laws, with statutes against obstructing law enforcement sometimes cited. Illinois, Massachusetts, and Maryland are among the twelve states in which all parties must consent for a recording to be legal unless, as with TV news crews, it is obvious to all that recording is underway. Since the police do not consent, the camera-wielder can be arrested. Most all-party-consent states also include an exception for recording in public places where "no expectation of privacy exists" (Illinois does not.) In

practice this exception is not being recognized.

-->Anarchy in Bloomingdales dept: Anarchist News Dot Org reports that the Axe perfume company is making a new fragrance. You guessed it Anarchy Perfume. (Does it smell like tear gas?) One of the commercials for it: A female police officer chases a masked jewelry thief through a sun-drenched cityscape. Sprinting, he pulls off his mask, sheds his jacket and dumps his bag of loot; she throws off her police hat, undoes her utility belt and drops her weapons to the ground. She's no longer a cop; he's no longer a criminal. They stare at each other with unbridled desire. The words "Nothing will ever be the same again" appear on the screen, followed by the warning "Anarchy is coming." Can *Eau d'Punk* be far behind?

--> *If it takes the blood of one Christian boy to make 40 matzohs, how many matzos can you make from 143 Christian boys dept:* Kyle Nooneman, whose quote starts this column, sent me this from the Huffington Post:

Parents of students at Beaver Ridge Elementary School in Norcross, Ga., are outraged at the school district's using examples of slavery in math word problems, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports.

The word problems in question include references to slavery and "beatings."

Here are some examples:

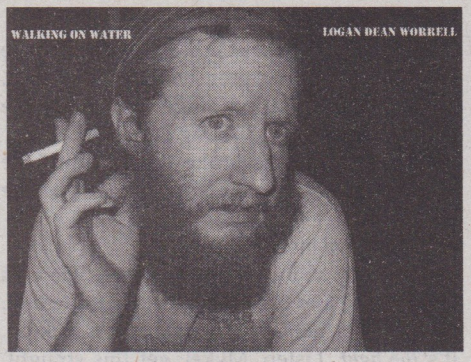
"Each tree had 56 oranges. If 8 slaves pick them equally, then how many would each slave pick?" and "If Frederick got two beatings per day, how many beatings did he get in 1 week?"

-->*I wish he were right dept:* New Jersey Governor Chris Christie attacked President Obama as encouraging a nation that "places comfortable lies ahead of difficult truths" and a person who is trying to "divide the country by demonizing the wealthy." If only it were true! The wealthy *are* demons. Much more than Muslims or non-working people or old people that the Republicans are trying to demonize. Obama, unfortunately, could never be so good as to demonize the right people.

-->*That's so ghetto dept:* Kyle also sent me this one about Microsoft. They make this mapping app to keep drivers out of dangerous neighborhoods. In modern American cities, this means places where there are a lot of Negroes or Hispanics. Since most urban crime is between people who know each other and not random drivers, one critic of the app suggests:

A more useful app would be for young black men to be able to map blocks with the highest risks of their being pulled over or stopped on the street by police," he said. "That phenomenon affects many more people than the rare occurrences of random violence against motorists driving through 'bad' neighborhoods."

I say, yeah, but the guys being pulled over by the cops usually can't afford iPhones to use the app on... unless they steal them.



I didn't do a column last month. Hopefully, you all were able to endure in my absence. I apologize. Please forgive me. A lot has changed in the past month. My life at this point is a pretty serious departure from what it once was. I'm okay with it, but with all that has been happening, it's kind of a lot to process. I really don't know how to say this, but gang, I'm going to be a dad.

It all just sort of happened. There I was occupying city hall holding my patented "We are the 1% sign" (I was later informed that this was incorrect), when there across a sea a weed smoked and "devil sticks," I saw her. Jet black hair and that kind of body that would make a lesser man cum in his pants. Immediately, I felt an uncontrollable urge to introduce myself. Her name was Rhianna. She was beautiful. We discussed the cause for a bit before a long walk around the capitol while holding hands and gazing into each other's eyes. Rhianna said things that no one had ever said to me before and they touched me in a very special place that I didn't even realize was within me. We made love for the first time next to a burning cop car and amidst a cloud of tear gas, we looked into each other's eyes and in perfect sync, whispered, "I love you."

I moved in immediately. She has a place in the suburb of Pflugerville, located just north of Austin. Her parents live there as well, but ever since we broke the news about the child, they have been a great deal more cordial and welcoming to me. My first thought after Rhianna told me that she was pregnant, was of course, "Well, this isn't that big of a deal. We'll just go in for the kill and get an abortion". After pitching this idea to Rhianna and subsequently dealing with an endless, violent, sobbing fit, we came to the agreement that before we made any decisions about out unborn baby, I would attend a church sermon at the church her father presided over as pastor. I don't know if it was the power or prayer or, more likely, the extreme pressure her family was forcing on me to keep the child, but my experience at the church made me feel safe for the first time in my entire life.

Rhianna's church offers an expecting first time parents program at no cost to us, which comes in handy right now after leaving my job at Emo's due to the fact that my on-shift drinking was becoming a problem. I don't know if Rhianna just couldn't handle the lifestyle, but regardless, we came to the conclusion that neither of us would be succumbing to the devil's temptation known as alcohol any longer. Weed is fine. God planted it for us to use. My lover even says that once the baby is born we can do ecstasy together on occasion just so long as she breastfeeds beforehand. Rhianna is being such a trooper during this whole ordeal. She's doing dubstep aerobics during her first and second trimester to ensure her figure goes back to being tight and firm rather then leathery and disgusting. For the record, dubstep isn't all bad. Some of the tracks I've been listening too are actually great. Rhianna's brother Travis — who spins under the name DJ ERACEH8TE — lays them down every Monday night at the Top Dawgs on Cesar Chavez and Robert T. Martinez. Plug!!!

Names have been a real nightmare. It is just so hard to think of a name that our tiny little person will be stuck with forever. Marley, Emmitt, Maus, Shauna, Arpeggio. Ugh, it was just so darn hard. We finally decided on a few names. We don't want to know if it's a boy or a girl so we are just going to wait and *see*!!! If it's a girl, she will be named Eloise Majestic Worrell and if it's a boy, Emmit Sparkle Worrell. We're using family names of course. Rhianna's grandfather, Grandpa Sparkle, was so kind to pay for my tattoo removal. Well, not all of it, but the ones on my hands at least :-), so we thought the least we could do was make him our little wonder's namesake.

Selling my truck and guns were the only real hurdles we had to jump when it came to all of the amenities I was going have to give up. I initially though a gun safe would be enough to protect my child, but alas, Rhianna said no. Oh well. The truck was a little harder. Rhianna wouldn't ride in the truck in the first place, due to how many fossil fuels it used. She insisted that I start riding a bicycle, not only to help erase our carbon footprint, but also to help strengthen my newly smoke-free lungs. Did you know that when you smoke, everyone around you smokes too? Holy cow! We reached our first relationship compromise. How cute is that? As my new job was on the other side of Austin, I had to lay down the law and tell my lover that there was no way I could make it to The Container Store on her old Schwinn. Thankfully, the good Pastor got me a great deal on a '97 Ford Escort wagon and, although purple doesn't really bring out my eyes, it truly is Rhianna's signature color.

Well, that's about it. Pretty crazy, right? In case you were wondering, Rhianna and I are registered on amazon.com among other online retailers. Feel free to get us some baby clothes or toys or whatever. Every little thing helps right now. TCS doesn't really pay too well, but the insurance is top notch. It's actually not very good, but "Top Notch Insurance Providers" will just have to do. I mean, it's not

like every insurance provider covers Apache trained and certified midwives.
Send love and prayers to ldworrell@gmail.com

One of the central plot points of Dario Argento's masterful *giallo* film *Profundo Rosso* is the theme of a damaged, even deranged child who was a witness to—if not a perpetrator of—murder. His use of eerily simple children's music and art is one of the outstandingly creepy aspects of the film. As I looked over the STAGNATION / CONTROL split EP, I was immediately reminded of the power of simple, even child-like imagery when re-purposed for an aggressive context. From the schizophrenic scribbles of the cover and interior art to the wild, stripped-down noize inside, this EP has an air of menace that few releases outside of the original Kyushu scene have been able to capture. CONTROL is firmly in the DISORDER-by-way-of-CONFUSE camp, of course, and these tracks blow the material on the live tape/EP out of the fucking water. The drumming could be lifted right out of the *Nuclear Addict* flexi with all the toms and rolls, the bass leads with brutally efficient riffing, and the vocals sound like the singer might burst right out of your speaker with a broken bottle aimed at your face. This is authentic, raw, back alley fighting music of the highest caliber and an excellent reminder that the GAI / CONFUSE / SEIG HEIL crew were in the early days a bunch of violent little shits who got banned from every venue they played.

STAGNATION is a bit higher concept than their split mates, but that isn't to say that they're fucking around with a bunch of frills either. With two guitars—one dedicated to full-time fuzz and the other spewing out wild Ginn-esque leads—STAGNATION has a fuller sound than most bands playing the noize game. They also have one of the best bass players out there; the stuff that he writes is just brilliant and that locked-in rhythm section gives the wild vocals and guitar work a grounding that brings some semblance of order to the chaos. This is a crucial EP with which to feed the rage of your murderous inner child and an early leader for split of the year. (Hardcore Survives, who have a spiffy new website at hardcoresurvives.com)

Black Konflik records have graced us with a really excellent (unsurprising, since their stable of releases is pretty fucking brilliant) cassette entitled *Fuck More* from prolific noize masters CHAOS DESTROY. The tape consists of two sessions, one from their earlier, guitar-less lineup in 2007 and a second from 2009 as a four-piece. While there are songs from various releases (*Music Not Music* EP, *Collection Not Collection* LP), I don't know that these have been released before. At any rate, this is very much up to their usual standard of unhinged, shrieking ineptitude, with wild bass lines cutting through sheets of fuzz and tin can drums while the singular voice of Hansel gibbers and raves like the lost love child of Nick Blinko and Watch. The GAI influence is obvious, but CHAOS DESTROY isn't just going through the motions of homage, they're very much doing their own thing. I love it when a band can establish itself as a total package, and from their aesthetic to their sound to their approach to live performances CHAOS DESTROY is a unique entity. The frequent stop-starts and dropouts on the tape only add to the chaotic feel of the tracks contained herein. I will never understand why this band doesn't get more credit in the scene, although their low profile and limited releases probably have something to do with that. Still, they have yet to put out a sub-par release and this is good even by their standards. Well worth picking up. (Black Konflik, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

Slightly less noisy, but still pretty chaotic, the Bay Area's own EFFLUXUS has put out their 2011 demo as a flexi and damn does it slay. There's a definite demos-era DOOM influence at play, but this also features shredding solos and reverbed vocals that add an element of desolate early crust to the sound. The riffing is totally effective, making this simple but memorable enough to stand out from a lot of more generic bands that try this style. There's a serious lack of bands playing this kind of heavy, chaotic hardcore around here at the moment, and these kids have been killing it since they showed up on the scene. Besides that, I do love my flexis and this one looks and sounds fantastic. It's totally raw, but with nothing lost in the mix at all. I dunno how many of these are still around, but it's worth dropping them a line. I am certainly looking forward to hearing more of this in 2012. (radicalpunksneverdie@gmail.com)

Backing slowly away from the noize for the time being, Tokyo's VENDETTA has dropped a solid EP of rocking punk that joins at UK82 approach to a more melodic, almost DEAD BOYS-ish '77 sound. Akira's vocals remind me a bit of PELIGRO SOCIAL / RULETA RUSA's Jose at time, and some of the guitar leads aren't that far from PELIGRO's either. VENDETTA features members of INTRUDERS, but there's quite a gap between the two bands, as the anthemic quality of INTRUDERS takes a back seat to melody (though the choruses are still fist-pumping for sure). Apparently they already have a second EP in the works courtesy of Hardcore Survives, but in the meantime you ought to snap up this limited self-released record while you can. (Vendetta Music, (punkfutures82@gmail.com)

I will skip my usual disparaging remarks about the MPDS scene, which always seem to preface my writing about this band, and simply tell you this time that the new DORAID cassette *Alive at the Inferno Vol. 4: Demon Revival* is both awesomely named and totally ripping. The solos are ridiculously over-the-top awesome as always, the slavering vocals lead as much as any instrument, and at the core of it all is a rock-solid Motörpunk approach that will appeal as much to the punks as the metallers. "Liberation Song (New Jersey Mix)" is as close to a ballad as these guys will ever get in that it's a mid-tempo NWOBHM ripper that begs to be played loud as fuck and accompanied by much air guitar. The included card says that DORAID will be releasing a split with DISGRAPHIA (ex-CROCODILE SKINK), who put out an awesome demo a while ago, so keep an eye out for that as well. (Torture Machine records, (http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/torturemachine1980).

Obviously this has been a good month for new releases, but I will forever remember this month for two other highlights. One, I finally scored myself a copy of the JIGOKU MANJYU flexi (fuck yeah). Two, I will for a fleeting evening once more be able to taste the nectar of the gods, as it is again time for Russian River brewing to release the limited run of Pliny the Younger (aka the best beer on Earth). 2012 has been pretty sweet so far, and it's only getting better. Next month, *two* new EPs by DISTURD! Until then, hate mail and raw punk demos to me c/o *MRR* or email me atagunderwood@gmail.com

In the '80s I listened to a lot of hip-hop. At the time it was a new and exciting genre, as was death metal. In comparison to death metal, which I was pretty into collecting on vinyl, I never collected much hip-hop vinyl. But I bought a lot of corner store bootleg tapes, and dubbed my roommates CDs. At a certain point in the early '90s I totally hit a wall with both death metal and hip-hop. Both genres seemed to have been pretty played out, and

degenerated into replication and parody of their former greatness. People constantly tried to re-educate me, but I never got into new artists from either genre again. I was mostly listening to hardcore in the '90s, but I started to spend more and more time digging through crates at record swaps and used record stores, paying attention to the other genres I was used to flipping past to find the hardcore records. I got into '60s psych, '70s glam and hard rock, and especially funk, soul and R&B. The more I started to check '60s and '70s funk records, the more I realized that most of what I had enjoyed about hip-hop was the music hip-hop artists were sampling. And it started to sink in that I was less interested in '80s rap artists than I was in the "roots" of P-Funk, Curtis Mayfield, Isaac Hayes, the Meters and so on.

One artist that has really grown on me is the great Curtis Mayfield. Although I grew up around a lot of R&B and funk music, being from the DC area, I wasn't terribly familiar with Mayfield until I picked up a dollar bin copy of the soundtrack to *Super Fly*. What was initially an ironic Blaxploitation soundtrack record purchase turned into a real awakening when I got heavily into the jams once I got the record home. I dug into Mayfield's career and he stands as one of the greats to me. Curtis Mayfield hailed from Chicago and got into music through gospel and doo-wop. Mayfield was supremely talented. He wrote his own material as well as material for other artists, played several instruments, and was a gifted producer, but if I had to pick any feature, I'd have to say that his soulful and evocative voice was one of the greatest in R&B.

His first successful band was the Impressions, a talented, but not atypical Motown combo. But far from just being entertainers, the Impressions had a social agenda. Their songs (penned by Mayfield) "Keep on Pushing" and "People Get Ready" became anthems of the civil rights movement and their music helped to inspire and steel many of the activists of that era. Music at its best serves as a sort of social commentary, helping to educate or activate. Also it can help inspire and embolden and then empower. You can't help but listen to the uplifting sounds of the Impressions "People Get Ready" and not picture how the music helped give the activists in those times the courage to take a stand and fight for social change.

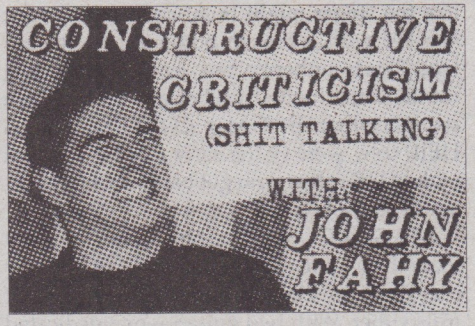
As the promise and hope of the early '60s activist movement degenerated into the violence, civil strife, and repression of the late '60s and early '70s, Curtis went solo. Much of his music continued to be upbeat and uplifting, but he moved more towards new funk sounds and away from Motown Soul. But at the same time he began to tackle bigger, darker, and more complex issues. A record like *Super Fly* transcends the Blaxploitation film for which it was made, being instead a pioneering work of hard-hitting social commentary. Mayfield was sometimes called "the storyteller" and on *Super Fly* he tells the hard luck tales of the drug addict, pimp, and gangster with so much more soul and passion than the movie it accompanied.

By mixing the roles of musician, storyteller, and social activist Curtis Mayfield was able to paint a picture of "hardcore urban reality" in such clear tones that his lyrics, beats, and bass lines are still sampled by modern hip hop artists. I remember bringing home *Super Fly*, spinning it for the first time, and realizing how many of the songs I recognized bits and pieces of from hip hop samples. I feel like Curtis helped pave the way for early hip-hop by mixing powerful music with social commentary and activism. I feel, however, that much of the social message was quickly lost and degenerated into a shallow glorification of gangsterism and drug culture, instead of a cry of protest and outrage. This is not too different from how people latched onto the media version of "Quincy punk" in the '80s and started coming to shows just for violence and stupidity instead of the more elevated ideas of hardcore punk that some of the originators had in mind.

While *Super Fly* is probably Curtis' best-known solo record—and seems to be the most common to pop up on vinyl—his other two early solo LPs are both excellent. *Roots* and *Curtis* are some of the classics of early '70s funk/soul. On those two LPs, Curtis' voice is as amazing as always, and there are more sick bass lines and catchy riffs on these records than in many other artists' entire careers. "Don't Worry, If There's a Hell Below, We're All Gonna Go" sounds just as powerful today as it did in the early '70s and funk ragers don't get any sicker than "Get Down" off the *Roots* LP. "Underground" has a darker heavier vibe like "...There's a Hell Below." At the same time the uplifting and soulful anthems kept coming with "Keep On Keeping On," which is very much in the spirit of his civil rights anthems. His fourth solo LP *Back to the World* is pretty good but doesn't quite rise to the level of the first three. Mayfield continued to write and record until his death in the 1990s. While his talent and social activism never diminished, and he wrote some great songs, I don't think much of his later work quite captured the vibe of those first three solo LPs. If you come home from the record swap meet or yard sale with one of these records, the first thing you notice is just how many of these songs you already know from being sampled on hip hop records. Then you realize that Curtis Mayfield was the genius and the other artists, are in his shadow.

Mayfield wrote and recorded on his own terms and his strident social activism cost him heavily in dealing with the music business. You *never* hear this guys music on the radio. I think the only time I hear Curtis on the radio is on MLK day when they dust off "People Get Ready" and then drop it for the next 364 days. Unless you are listening to some kind of "deep cuts" or "solid gold soul" kind of specialty program you are never going to hear this guy in rotation. His social stance got him blacklisted from all commercial radio long ago, never to resurface. I would contrast this to Sly Stone, another strong personal favorite of mine, who had a strong social message as well, but also a really upbeat party vibe to his music. Somehow Sly Stone was able to play ball with the industry enough to get the airplay and commercial success, but Mayfield wasn't. I remember a few years ago when Michael Jackson died and people were treating that guy like he was some kind of saint/superhero/genius. Michael Jackson was a creep, probably a child molester and seemed pretty crazed and degenerate even by the standards of popular music. Yet this guy gets all kinds of media superstar packaging and millions of dollars behind him because he's willing to be a front for corporate interests, while the true greats like Curtis Mayfield and Sly Stone whose music had so much power and potential for real unity and social change are relegated to DJ crates and late night free form radio.

Is the establishment afraid of what these artists have to say? Is their message, like that of punk, a little too "real" for mainstream entertainment? If you aren't convinced by now that Curtis Mayfield is a total rager, consider that he was paralyzed from the neck down in a tragic accident where a lighting rig fell on him at a gig. He wrote and recorded his last LP, *New World Order* despite being paralyzed recording the vocals lying on his back in the studio. He died in 1999. So next time you are digging through the used record bins, pick up *Curtis*, *Roots*, and *Super Fly*—great albums by one of the most talented and righteous musicians of our time.



Dive Bar of the Universe

Former co-ordinator Justin Briggs once mixtaped me a song called "Space Junk" by ORdER, one hell of an awkward stop-and-start song that is viciously catchy. Immediately, this song entered my mind as I read of a planned space-sweeper to catch humanity's cosmic crap. Switzerland, the hall-monitor of the international community, has devised something like a magnet to catch all of the discarded satellites and other shit the

world's space programs have left spinning in orbit around the earth—not for the sake of tidiness, but because space junk is now a hazard. Travelling at thousands of miles an hour, there is now too much debris to navigate when launching new satellites or astronaut missions into space.

World scientists—the mysterious world science community, likely populated by utter potheads—have actually considered this as a problem. One such scientist was quoted as speculating that one remote reason global warming should be eradicated is because aliens may see our self-destructive behavior as dangerous, especially if we push our sewage further into space as our science accelerates. Rightfully so! Nothing should tip off alien observers that we do not have our shit together like a flotilla of our own waste careening around the planet at absurd speeds, posing threats to our very own astronauts. These same scientists constantly reveal to the press the myriad of ways we could possibly be going extinct and you've got to love the sensational fashion in which some of them drop these bombshells. Like when some lady gives her fellow scientists the under-the-bus treatment by summarily inferring that the Hadron particle collider in Europe is going to create a fucking black hole and swallow the universe, or when a European and Japanese pair of colleagues back up the bus and drive over their buddies again by deducing in internal memos that they believe the Hadron collider is actually being sabotaged by time-travelers from the future! These are real predictions from the people we've tasked with saving us!

No black and white cover art depicting massacres can summarize how fucked we are. No half-toned image of any politician can speak to how corrupt our civilization is. Despite the wishes of the bigots like Santorum and the power-starved like Romney, Barack Obama will likely win the election. Some of us will feel like we've accomplished something by defeating ultra-fucked-up forces while safeguarding typical-fucked-up forces. "Progressives" will delight at the election of a man who has demanded all citizens pay private companies for health insurance, who has kept the concentration camp at Guantanamo open, has not even mentioned repealing the Patriot Act, doubled down on the invasion of Afghanistan and continued to push a typical pro-Wall Street agenda while touting populist rhetoric to win votes from an increasingly desperate populace. How are the scientists going to get us out of this shit?

Not any magic weapon or any stoner dream of a black hole arising from Switzerland but likely through making tiny-baby computer chips placed in mobile devices for all of us to develop annoying social habits with. Ironically, many who read the news of the abuses of Apple iPhone-assembling Chinese workers read it on an Apple device. The acceleration of information is what is changing everything and challenging what was previously called democracy. The U.S. has had to backtrack on what were previously friendly, safe bets for allies, like Ghaddafi in Libya. Before, a government crackdown would be helped by colonial powers to suppress democracy. Now, that is much harder to do. Similarly, lies and truths the public were not meant to know can be accessed and published by groups of hackers who regularly call out the most powerful elites for their hypocrisy and let people judge for themselves. Anyone who wants to dig around can find what is motivating governments, companies and individuals and then spread the word. For instance, I doubt any of us have known who the equivalent of the Koch brothers would be in the 1970s. They would just be millionaires, lobby for their interests, remain anonymous and profit. Today, the Koch brothers can be called out and boycotted and the politicians in their pocket can be called out and recalled. It's not corporate defeat, but the footing is becoming more equal through people educating themselves. Now, the powerful are forced to react to emerging democracy.

In the case of Apple, the initial reaction to the scandal is what I would call the "George W. Bush tack." This method basically says, "fuck you, I did it and I'll do it again—what are you gonna do?" Apple's own way of saying this was,"Apple consumers are more concerned with speedily getting new products than with Chinese labor abuses." Now, callous as that could possibly be(straight up Bush-level shit right there, up there with the best of 'em; with hits like, "Yeah, so what? I made a guy who hates the U.N. the U.S. ambassador to the U.N." "Yeah, I like to joke around about not finding WMDs, what's your beef?" The balls on that fucking prick.), is that shit not the fucking truth? Americans definitely want some shit and they definitely want it fucking fast, but can they handle a bunch of internet jerkoffs hassling them about their purchase karma all of the time? Apple wasn't so sure - they backtracked and said the company would get on top of the problem, particularly relating to child labor abuses. That and they are excited to begin thinking of ways to spend the hundred billion dollars in profit they now sit on as a result of working conditions that saw employees choose death over assembly.

These two responses to me are emblematic of the Bush/Obama methods of communication to the masses. Bush simply would say, "look... it is what it is, alright?" While Obama's method would be to promise to take on tackling the problem, albeit half-heartedly. The difference is, which tactic galvanizes the public to actually correct a wrong? In my opinion, Apple started an honest discussion when they defended their human rights abuses. The back-pedal from the company shortly thereafter is what calms a mother of three who uses an iPhone and doesn't have the time, will or patience to take on boycotting a company that makes a handy product that everyone loves. If Apple had stayed the course and asked consumers if they'd give up their iPhone to bring back a dead Chinese child, we'd be getting some interesting answers. To begin a productive discussion, we need to have an honest one.

Our Swiss Space-Sweeper is not meant to clean our orbit from debris. It is meant to clear the way for new shit to pollute the solar system with. Almost inconceivably sad, the first thing an extra-terrestrial observer/traveller peering through space binoculars in our direction would see is our trash heap front lawn. Likely, shocked and whispering, "fuck... that," in an alien tongue.

ENDNOTES:

1. Contact me: John Fahy/15011 lakeview drive/Apt. 2402/Ft. Myers/FL/33919/USA or fahy_john@hotmail.com

2. Just returned from the International Noise Conference in Miami and saw many killer sets including but not limited to NO MILK, MERCHANDISE, RUSSIAN TSARLAG, COP CITY CHILL PILLARS, COCA LEAF and MINDLESS ATTACK, who particularly shook up the show with some ultra-tight punk insanity.

3. I made the mistake of travelling down a road laden with booby traps and character-building regrets. I have enjoyed a song off of a compilation since I was thirteen and have had trouble finding anything else from the band which performs it. I track down the singer of the group and message him looking for more output to feast my ears upon. He is now a jerkoff radio show host and sends me back an unhelpful reply, "CDs are ten bucks." I ask for more purchase info to no avail. What a piece of shit! I still want what I want! This is over a year ago. Finally, I find what I think is a holy grail - a mini-LP of material from the band. It arrived in the mail today. Wrong band, same name, twenty bucks spent. Fuck me running. See you at the used bins.

4. Contact ifbrecords@gmail.com for a copy of the SHOPPERS/PANZRAM split. SHOPPERS truly out-do themselves on this thing. If you thought their LP was a head-turner, get ready for song one off their side of the split. Totally fuzzed out, piercing, pop-bliss tune that opens up steady and gorgeous and works its way into an anxious, uplifting tantrum that sees Meredith sporting half a dozen vocal tracks, each one singing something insanely catchy or maligned or disfigured. A song to mixtape for the next decade! The only drawback about this tune is that it overshadows what a fierce banger song two is. Joe from P-RAM screened the cover photos of the split and they feature childhood photos of all band members and artwork by Joe and Meredith. I'm really excited to be a part of this record!

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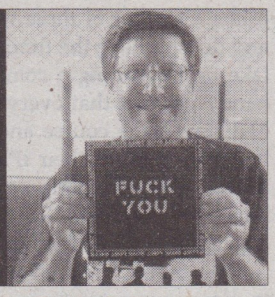


Invasion of the Bottle Collectors

I start this column with some good news. My lovely wife Ellen, who had been out of work for quite awhile, found a new job that's in her field (social work) that actually pays close to what she was making in her previous job. What a relief, especially since her unemployment benefits were about to run out. I haven't had a "regular" job for quite some time but I've been known to take the occasional odd job. I delivered phone books during one time that I was between jobs. And I wish I had a nickel for every time some wise-ass would quote the line from Steve Martin's movie *The Jerk: "The new phone book's here! The new phone book's here... I'm somebody now!"* One of my friends even used that line on me when he found out I was doing phone book delivery. When I was out there, I had flashbacks to my days of delivering papers and getting chased by mean dogs.

Ah yes—nickels. We'll get to that. I had another one of those odd jobs over the summer. You've probably encountered people outside of the supermarket or in front of the post office holding clipboards and trying to collect signatures for various ballot questions. Direct democracy at its best…or worst. After all, those propositions have been used to create or overturn laws that directly harm people, be it overturning gay marriage in California or capping property taxes, which reduces revenues, leading to schools getting closed, services get cut back, etc., unless the town votes for an override. There was even an attempt by a libertarian group here in Massachusetts to abolish the state income tax. Thankfully, that failed.

I was starting to see the clipboard holders out in front of the Market Basket and Shaw's supermarkets over the summer. Since I needed a few bucks, I asked one of the guys collecting signatures if they needed more people. He gave me the number of the Massachusetts Beverage Association. They're a lobbying group for, as you might have guessed, various soda and beer manufacturers. They're the group that always fights against school districts trying to remove soda machines. They're also vehemently opposed to any attempt to expand the state's "bottle bill." As it stands, you pay a five-cent deposit on soda and beer in this state. There have been attempts to expand the law to include water and juice bottles. Needless to say, that's not too popular with the industry people. So they've come up with a ballot question that would completely scrap the bottle bill. They claim that curbside recycling has become more commonplace. That's true in our city—they've limited the number of trash barrels you can put out and now do pickup of recyclable materials every week instead of every other week. I've become a lot more diligent about recycling. I don't just put newspapers out, I also break down cereal and cracker boxes and make sure all non-refundable bottles, Styrofoam, and plastics get put in the bin. I'd actually be in favor of scrapping the bottle bill since it wouldn't be a big deal to add soda bottles and cans to the bin. No more nickel deposits.

But the main reason I'd want to scrap it is because I'm tired of seeing people pushing shopping carts around our neighborhood, filled up with cans and bottles. The clattering of the carts makes a lot of noise and they often leave a mess behind. On top of that, how *dare* they steal the supermarket's property? My food prices are high enough already. Every time one of those carts goes missing, it means I'll be paying more for my bananas, coffee cakes, frozen burritos, and BBQ rice crack. They're actually rice crackers but there's something in them that makes me eat an entire bag in one sitting—so I call 'em crack.

Anyway, after contacting the MBA, I filled out the appropriate paperwork and was dispatched to Market Basket. When I was taking signatures outside of the store, it was right next to the bottle redemption room. It was an endless parade of these individuals and their trash-filled carts. And right by the door, there was a sign saying that the store was hiring. I saw guys out in the parking lot all day shagging carriages. I used to do that when I was in high school. This was not a pleasant task, especially when it was hot out or in the dead of winter. The carriages had a tendency to freeze to the parking lot. A couple of times, when I pushed the carts while on an icy lot, I ended up damn near landing flat on my face. I also lost control of a line of carts when going through the door and grazed the posterior of a customer. She proceeded to complain to the manager and I almost got fired. I did eventually get fired when an egg or two got cracked when I was putting some in a bag and the asshole customer complained. At least I didn't get beaten up like the Zander Schloss character in *Repo Man*.

So if these bottle people like pushing shopping carts around, why don't they get a *real* job fetching them from the store parking lot? What's the minimum wage these days? $7.25? That's 145 bottles and cans and I'd guess it takes way more than an hour to collect that many of them. The unemployment rate is down and that means more people spending money, including food, and the extra customers mean more shopping carts in the lot that need to be collected. And there's room for growth. It's only a matter of time until they'd be promoted to bagger or maybe even shelf-stocker.

Anyway, the petitioners are still waiting to find out whether or not the bill gets on the ballot this fall. I hope it does and I hope it passes. We'll avoid having to pay the deposit and just be able to put out their trash and recyclables without worrying about people constantly scrounging through our trashcans and bins and making a mess and an unholy racket when I'm trying to get some sleep. It's good for the environment in so many ways. I have to admit, though, I'd rather hang around with the bottle collectors than the annoying Lyndon LaRouche assholes who occasionally set up a table in front of the post office, with their Obama-as-Nazi signs. But that's another topic for another time...

Records That Don't Need To Be Recycled

I just got a nice package of records from the Australian label Hardcore Victim, via their US distributor Havoc. Maybe nice isn't the right term, when it concerns the musical contents. Two 12"s and a 7" and all of 'em favoring raw, distorted hardcore. KROMOSOM's 8 track 12", cleverly titled *8 Tracks*, has been re-mastered and re-mixed. There seems to be a tad more brightness in the mix but there's nothing glossy or polished about the blazing KAAOS / DISORDER-inspired assault. Yeap (former PISSCHRIST vocalist) is quiet and soft-spoken until he gets the microphone in his hands and then terror gets unleashed. And it's not buried under a wall of impenetrable feedback, making it a much more listenable proposition. If Yeap's a gutteral vocalist, the yin to his yang (or is it yan to ying?) is VAGINORS' vocalist Rat Boy, with a high-pitched helium yowl that sounds like a ranting Doc Dart from the CRUCIFUCKS fronting another Finnish-sounding band (Kaaos, once again), along with some older Japanese influences. On their *Nuclear Papsmear* 12", the drums and bass are up front, with the guitars generating sheets of distortion behind them. The synth bleeps (I think that's what they are) for ""A.D.D." are a very cool touch. Total annoy-the-neighbors music that's a whole lot of loud fun. The final selection in this trilogy of terror comes from LEPROSY on their *5 Tracks* 7". Basic, crusty thrash that gets the job done, no more or less, and I don't mean that as a slight. Leprosy imbues their music with a vigorous rage. (US distro via Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

Pittsburgh band KIM PHUC has been lurking about for a number of years and has finally seen their debut album, the subtly titled *Copsucker*, released on Iron Lung. A moody yet muscular sound with droning, fiery properties, though it's not always at a slackened tempo. In fact, after the mid-paced "23" that opens side two, there are three quick-hitting scorchers in a row. Kim Phuc has the same sort of early-'80s UK haunt that permeates the sound of bands like ARCTIC FLOWERS, although the

riffing here is chunkier and it's a tougher-sounding male vocalist. And there's warmth in the crush of "Prostitute" and the closing "Wormwood Star," even when it's not the happiest-sounding music. An ear-enveloping collection. (PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145, lifeironlungdeath.blogspot.com)

PLATES, from Buffalo, has been around for a few years, and their self-titled LP is a volume-drenched head-messer. Thick, huge slabs of guitar and (especially) bass (played by Biff from I OBJECT / BROWN SUGAR) stake out the band's pummeling attack. I'm not sure about the point of calling one side "Flashing The Steel" and the other "Gang Shower," but plenty of musical steel is flashed here (damn, that's some crappy rock critiquery). This is the type of heavy, semi-abrasive rock that wouldn't have been out of place on Amphetamine Reptile in the '90s. Nods to HAWKWIND, with some of the whizzly guitar effects, and "Sentimental Jenny Jones Fodder" manages to be crushing *and* somewhat trippy at the same time. For pure punk-imbued raucousness, look no further than "Sociology 101" or "Under Suspect Tutelage." Something tells me I'd need heavy-duty earplugs if I saw these guys live. I hope I get the chance. (Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

CRUDDY's album *Negative World* would most-assuredly have been in my top ten of 2011 if I'd acquired it before the end of the year. Hell, I hadn't even heard of them until stumbling across some of their music on the internet and it instantly hooked me. Knotty, gnarled punk with kinetic nervousness. Staccato, jabbing guitar playing off throbbing bass and drums, along with sing/speak vocals. Digging in a bit, there's definitely a bit of the FALL's thorniness. The rumble of the brief opening song, "Slow News Day," had me thinking of the old Aussie bluesy pigfuckers FEEDTIME, albeit without the slide guitar. "Burn It Down" by the SUICIDE COMMANDOS is an inspiring cover choice, too. Cruddy's the type of punk band I find appealing these days, as they bring liveliness, freshness, and a variety of influences into the basic guitar/bass/drums setup. (12XU, 3005 S. Lamar Blvd. D109-403, Austin, TX 78704, www.12xu.net)

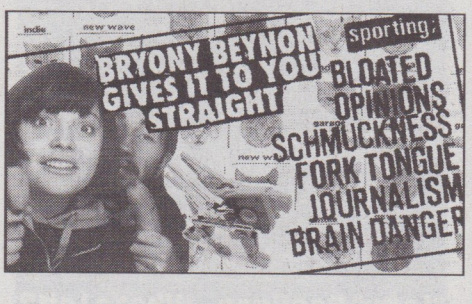
Like CRUDDY, CRIATURAS is from Austin but there's not a lot of musical similarity otherwise. For their first album, *Oscuridad Eternal*, this Spanish-language band come on hard and fast with a high-powered combination of punk, crust, hardcore, speed metal, and rock 'n roll in various permutations. I've warmed up to Dru's rant-sing—there's range there—and the songs mix things up stylistically. There's the rockin', catchy theme song "Criaturas," the full-on rampage of the title track, "Nunca Va A Cambiar" and "Quemado En La Hoguera. "Anarkia" is carried along by a scintillating bass melody by Eddie Lael and shit-hot axe wrangling from Victor Gutierrez, who delivers an arsenal of shredding leads and warmer textures (as with his and Eddie's other band VAASKA). Criaturas successfully balances full-on blitz with more tuneful shadings. (Trabuc, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords. Distributed in the US by Todo Destruido, tododestruido.blogspot.com)

SUNSHINE SS's second EP, *Teen Choices*, made my best of 2011 list and here's the tardy review—more stinging, rocking punk done at a medium clip. Tough and snarly, powered by beefy guitars and, as I've said before, the vocals remind me of Al from the PIST a bit. (Sacred Plague, www.sacredplague.com)

ANCIENT FILTH formed out of the ashes of FRUIT SALAD and have finally released their smokin' debut 7". Fast, rippin' hardcore punk with a high-pitched vocal bark and in-the-pocket musical delivery. This is a lavish package with a heavy-stock foldout sleeve, lyrics poster and plastic transparency on top of it. Explanatory essays accompany the lyrics; it's a plea to break away from complacency and conformity, both in the punk scene and in so-called real life. They talk about gaining control and not falling prey to societal norms while also not falling prey to clichéd punk norms. Boston hardcore continues to regenerate itself and Ancient Filth is good example of that—this is fiercely DIY and conveys a more-than-convincing amount of heartfelt passion, both musically and lyrically. (Shock To The System, PO Box 400206, Cambridge, MA 02140)

Damn, out of space already. For more reviews and other ruminations, go to the Suburban Voice blog (subvox.blogspot.com), which I resolve to update more frequently in 2012.

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net, www.sonicoverload.net



As this month's magazine will, I've no doubt, be tickling your ribs to a dangerous degree with a sickeningly LOL some barrage of timeworn hilarity, I thought I'd stick to being boring and just talk about a process I find interesting instead. It's something I don't now and will probably never understand, and that is recording. Recording music. I'm not going to lie, the whole thing has more than a bit of the bad science slash demon magic about it to me, so, as you may have guessed, I'm not going to be approaching this from a technical viewpoint. Imagine CC's column ("Basement Screams") with all the instructive parts mysteriously wiped out. Still, though I'm no seasoned expert I've done it a few times in a few different ways, so I do have some tips about how to stay sane while documenting yr drones for future obscurity. I probably won't share them all though because I like you to suffer. Still, here are five:

Firstly, as a general rule, fear technology. The studio (or indeed the garage, lounge, or bedroom, or wherever you've set yourself up to be slowly strangled by mic cables and stress, the boa constrictor of the mind) is a place where luddite leanings are good to listen to. If you're recording in the garage, lounge, or bedroom this is perhaps less of an issue because you've got a limit on the resources available and are maybe recording without the aid of a computer, but letting a crappy take slip through on the proviso that you can get matey boy behind the desk to digitally erase your drum fuck ups is serious folly. Firstly, because hi, do really want to hate yourself as people compliment your awesome demo and you smile knowing that in fact a Mr. P. Tools did the bulk of the work to get you sounding like this? Secondly, even if your playing is fine, you should try and get your "sound" right and not rely on noise-punking the fuck out of your perfectly reasonably pop record up with some rinky-dink garageband filter, because its gonna show (esp. when you play live and can't replicate it) and also because yknow on your deathbed you will remember.

The things you can do with computers when recording are fucking witchcraft if you ask me, but pretty amazing all the same and obviously are A Good Thing, however overreliance on them kind of takes the power out of your hands and makes it all a little sterile. A few mistakes and sloppy playing on a demo aren't going to make or break you, if anything it's insisting on a seventeenth take of your solo that's going to do that. Suffice to say, Lora Logic was not named after the recording suite, bro.

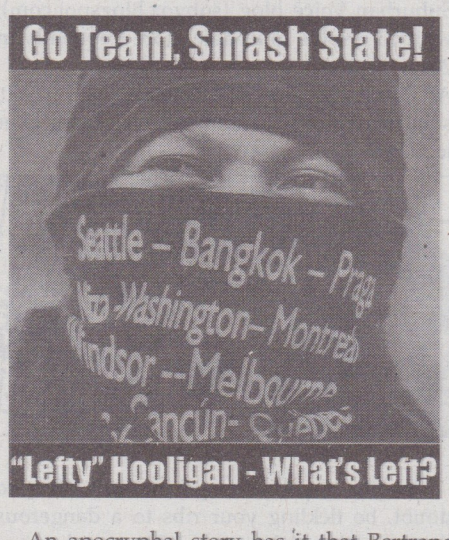
Secondly, Vocabulary. Watch your mouth. I don't mean hold off on cussing each other out, lord knows it's got to be done occasionally, and there are no grudges as strong, no bad vibes as virulent as those held between band members, its part of life's rich pattern. No, what I'm talking about is the kind of vocabulary unique to the recording environment, a seemingly boundless set of terminology pulled fresh from the arses of a thousand pontificators. I'm talking about shit like "plingy." Yeah, "plingy." You know these words, because they're the kinds that can only be uttered in desperation as you grasp and splutter around in your verbal abyss for a word to describe the sound of an isolated guitar playing along frantically to a song you wrote, or play on, and how you want it to be different. You know how it is, you're six hours in, and Brad

has decided his snare is still sounding a little "doongy." "Yeah man, like doong, doong, doong, you know, its too doongy..." he trails off, scratching his floppy hawk and cursing language for failing him in this hour of need. A few others I've squirmed in my boots as they've been bandied about are: "Plangy" (for bass), "Boshy" (Kickdrum), "Clanky," Slinky, Plinky (all guitar). Of course, things like rubbery bass, scratchy guitar, these are signifiers with a modicum of relative meaning IRL, or at least within a music setting enough to help the guy with the sliders get on with his shit, but for the love of God hold off getting into a philosophical debate about what you really mean when you ask your now weeping engineer for a "creamier low end." I'm sure there's a dictionary (dickheadtionary?) of these terms, but I don't frequent internet forums about tone, so I couldn't tell you.

The last two really refer to interpersonal relationships and band harmony, because ultimately no one wants a bust up so major that the records get thrown in a river while the keyboard player is locked in the boot of the car. It seems obvious, but consideration of others during the bizarre but necessary ritual of recording is something that's going to go such a long way and ultimately, not to be a total pseud, get a better performance out of everyone. Frexample, The first proper recording session I was involved in was in a railway arch with no heating, with a guy who, bless him, didn't really know what we wanted, and vice versa, and the singing, which was my role at the time, came at the end of a very long day, and I swear you can hear the mucus sliding down my oesophagus as I stumble through the fifth take. A guitarist can fudge through this kind of thing and just eat a biscuit and warm her hands on a heat source, but a singer you need to pamper yo'self like a big baby. I can recommend nasal spray for keeping the allergy-sounds off the record.

Bring a magazine or book sure, but don't go off into your own world, it's rude. And for god's sake leave your mp3 player at home, if your songs aren't good enough to be focused on for a day or two you might just be in a shit bad. And if someone else is doing their takes (if you aren't recording live I feel sorry for you btw, but that's just me) and you're sat around in an ocean of morose (which is normal) then go get them coffee and snacks! Kiss your moody bassist's ass a little about how fresh that boring solo he insisted on sounds. Tell the drummer she smacked it, even if she didn't, but mean it, you know. Take interest in what your engineer-person is doing, because it'll help when you have shit that's gotta be changed if you know the process, or at least a little about what they've been doing. Ultimately you've gotta produce the good vibes because that will make it *fun*, and humans like fun, even if you have to manipulate them into thinking their having it. Pull those strings, bad boy.

The "rough mix" stage is always going to be more intense and difficult than you think it is, for a few reasons. Firstly, it feels like the homestretch so everyone's kinda already breathed out mentally and is a bit like "yeah, that sounded fine, I guess?" Annoying as that must be for the person recording it, it's in no way as heinous as the creeping, insidious disease that can has killed many a perfectly well functioning band in the throes of concluding their recording. I'm talking about ISDS: Inevitable Selective Deafness Syndrome. In short this is the sudden inability to hear oneself on the finished recording, result in persistent requests that could range from the didactic outrage of "Turn me the fuck up this is ridiculous" to the passive aggressive, often barely audible mumble of "yeah I mean I guess my if guitar is meant to be more of a texture than actually audible, then yeah, I mean that's cool." Other important signs your band mate may be in the clutches of ISDS are a reddening of the cheeks, heightened anxiety and short-term memory loss. I've heard of emergency quarantines and other measures being put in place for persistent offenders, including instigating a rule that only the instrument being tracked is allowed to be discussed while the song plays, but these seldom work and can occasionally result in someone getting physically assaulted. It's a sad and dangerous disease that, if left unchecked or allowed to run wild, can make a perfectly good record sound, variously, like a karaoke backing track, a shamanic drum circle or an Ywngie fan's audio wank tape. Be vigilant, your band could be next.



An apocryphal story has it that Bertrand Russell was giving a public lecture on astronomy in which he described how the earth revolved around the sun and how in turn the sun revolved around the center of a collection of stars known as the Milky Way galaxy. Concluding his talk, Russell asked the audience if there were any questions. An old woman at the back of the auditorium raised her hand, stood and spoke. "You know, young man, what you have told us is utter rubbish. The earth is actually a flat plate resting on the back of a giant turtle."

Russell was startled by her remarks, but he recovered quickly and replied, "Well, madam, and what does the turtle stand on?"

"You think you're so clever, young man, so very clever indeed," she responded. "But its turtles all the way down."

Stephen Hawking told a version of this tale in his 1988 book *A Brief History of Time*. I believe Hawking used the story to illustrate the problems of infinite regress and unmoved mover in the realm of cosmology. I understand the story to be one of how a belief system, any belief system, always has an explanation handy in case its followers are boxed into a corner, logically speaking. Religions are the most common example of this phenomenon, with perhaps the most aggravating instance being the Republican primaries in which Newt Gingrich, a serial adulterer, was able to successfully if only momentarily appeal to fundamentalist Christians in the party. All men are sinners, the Bible reminds these believers, and so all Newt had to do was claim that he had confessed his sins and thrown himself upon the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ seeking absolution in order to convince the Republican evangelical base to forgive him, and more importantly, to vote for him. The notion that all manner of horror in the world can be justified by three simple words—"It's God's Will"—is another such escape hatch for faithful Christians; a vindication of blind faith that has converted more than a few believers to atheism once they realized what an utter sadistic bastard God must be in order to "will" the wholesale maiming and murder of innocents.

Science, too, falls into this category of a belief system in need of explanatory escape hatches. Science owes its strength to its predictive powers, and contends that if a scientific observer knows everything about a particular physical process, the individual scientist can then make accurate predictions about that process. If the predictions fail, or are inaccurate? Well, that must mean that not everything was known about the phenomenon in question. Some knowledge was missing. Never mind that science has, time and again, demonstrated that complete knowledge is an impossibility. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle states that there are limits to what can be known about related pairs of physical properties of a subatomic particle; that to accurately know the position of a particle one cannot simultaneously know its momentum and vice versa. Using mathematics, the language of science, Godel formulated his famous incompleteness theorem, which demonstrated that, in any closed mathematical system, there are an infinite number of true theorems which, though contained in the original system, can not be deduced from

it. Such qualifiers notwithstanding, most scientists are downright uncomfortable with the idea that their knowledge, of necessity, must be incomplete.

Politics is yet another domain rife with escape hatches. I'll focus on what I know, having once been a left anarchist, and having just recently decided I'm not pure enough to consider myself a left communist any longer. Both political currents posit the notion that workers—in the case of left communism a strictly defined proletariat, and in the case of anarchism a more nebulous notion of working and oppressed people—will rise up and seize control over society. Marxists talk of the working class going from a class in itself to a class for itself, of the self-activity and self-organization of the proletariat leading to the self-emancipation of the working class as a class, of the working class consciously abolishing itself as a social class. And it is presumed that this process will be anti-capitalist, and can occur partly, or entirely without resorting to a political party or a political state. Dozens of examples are then trotted out (The Paris Commune, 1871; Russia, 1905; Mexico, 1910-19; Russia, 1917-21; Ukraine, 1918-21; Germany, 1918-19, Bavaria, 1918-19; Northern Italy, 1918-21; Kronstadt, 1921; Shanghai, 1927; Spain, 1936-39; Germany, 1953; Hungary 1956; Shanghai, 1967; France, 1968; Czechoslovakia, 1968; Poland, 1970-71; Portugal, 1974; Angola, 1974; Poland, 1980-81; Argentina, 2001-02; etc.), all inspiring in their social self-government but all, without exception, short lived and unable to produce a fully realized, long lasting libertarian society.

So why did these many instances of bottom-up social revolution, of horizontal, non-representative, non-electoral decision making, of direct economic collectivization and communization fail, without exception? Enter a plethora of excuses.

Category one of excuses stresses the overwhelming power of the opposition these embryonic revolutions faced. The capitalist ruling class was too strong, its state too powerful, its police and army too brutal. The *bourgeoisie* resorted to fascism or merciless state terror to quell the uprising. A vicious counterrevolution and civil war obliterated the forces of revolution. However these social upheavals first succeeded, if they are unable to sustain their initial victories and successfully organize to defeat their enemies while maintaining the libertarian character of their new social order, then the revolutionary project is lost from the start. Short of social decay or political collapse, the powers-that-be undoubtedly will be stronger than the forces of revolution, all but insuring defeat.

Category two of excuses blames the revolution's supposed allies for the revolution's failure. The democrats, republicans, socialists, Leninists, Stalinists, nationalists, *et al*, that side with the revolution to begin with, or that the libertarian revolutionaries form alliances with in order to bring about or sustain the social revolution, are accused of double dealing, sabotaging, undermining, suppressing and, ultimately, betraying the true revolution and its libertarian instigators for their own interests and quest for power. This raises the question, why do anarchists and left communists never learn from history and form such dubious alliances to begin with? Or why are anarchists and left communists incapable of playing a strategic game, of using such allies to achieve their ends, then discarding them when necessary?

Excuses in the third category cite the mistakes made by the libertarian revolutionaries themselves. Bureaucratization, recreation of social hierarchy and political leadership, excessive utopianism, a willingness to join the government or recapitulate a state, an authoritarian use of violence against socially reactionary elements, the alienation of other social classes through economic expropriation; these are some of the principle mistakes detailed by critics and libertarians alike. To a failure to learn from history and an incapacity to have strategic game must be added an inability to be flexible, to realize errors immediately and to immediately correct them.

The excuses in category four refer to the failure of revolution due to undeveloped circumstances. Externally, the immature nature of historical and/or economic conditions is given for revolutionary defeat. While possibly correct, this is very difficult to prove, even in hindsight, and has the consequence of mandating forms of determinism and denying working class agency in making social revolutions. Internally, the lack of a sufficient class consciousness among workers is most often provided to explain why revolutions fail. Also hard to prove, class consciousness is a slippery concept that bears further analysis. Leninists contend that workers are only capable of trade union consciousness, and that the intervention of a party/cadre organization of professional revolutionaries is required to instill the proper revolutionary socialist consciousness within the proletariat, an inevitable recipe for substitutionism. Italian autonomous Marxism sidestepped the issue of class consciousness altogether by promoting the idea that what drives the revolutionary process forward is class composition. But working class composition has changed radically in the past four decades, what with the destruction of the industrial proletariat in the west and the rise of service workers and the so-called cognitariat, the expansion of underemployed and precarious workers, and the lumpenization of large sectors of the population. Without workplace unity and industrial discipline, is class consciousness even possible? In turn, this extreme recomposition of the working class in the west places the entire revolutionary project in jeopardy, as reflected in the Invisible Committee's substitution of an impotent, riotous insurrection for thoroughgoing social revolution.

Not coincidentally, all four categories of excuses—the power of the police, the movement's bureaucratization and reconstitution of secret leadership hierarchies, the manipulation of liberals, Leninists and decolonialists, ass-backwards substitutionism and insurrectionary vanguardism, insufficient working class content and consciousness—are bandied about in declaring the premature death of Occupy Oakland.

I've taken a different tack from making excuses. I've come to admit the possibility that the working class, historically in its industrial form or presently in its radically recomposed form, never possessed and does not now possess the capacity for self-emancipation as a class. I've added the inability of proletarian self-liberation to the non-existence of a World Turtle, of God, and of total scientific knowledge. I have closed off a slew of crucial escape hatches in the liberatory politics I once so fervently believed in by potentially denying the working class a capacity for self-emancipation. Thus I have renounced a cardinal principle of my former politics, one embodied in the Paris 1968 slogan "Be realistic, demand the impossible."

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.

I missed a local punk show the weekend before last because my girls were ill and I am too kind to bail on them in such obvious time of need (although I was so pissed off I couldn't honestly smile for days). So when last weekend came around I was doubly excited and even braved a snowstorm on the way. Walking from Hackney to Dalston in the snow, drinking ice-cold beer and smoking cigarettes, it felt like my teenage Mohican and studded jacket years when I was growing up in Sweden. And the show was great! I saw the reigning world number one hardcore band in

the world—THE LOWEST FORM—playing support to some down-tuned oi-black metal hipster fixed-bike band called SUMP (who are however really great as well!). I am already very excited about upcoming hardcore shows—Burial, TLF, Giftgasattack, The Wankys, Crude!!!

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You know that tooth I was talking about last month? I went to the dentist finally. She said I could have a root canal treatment. It would cost £200 but then I'd get a funky silver metal cap that would be indestructible. While I did not have that kind of dosh spare, my company just got acquired by some multinational with an employee benefit scheme including free dental insurance, which I had signed up for a few weeks before. So I was all like "Make me a cyborg baby! Pull out the goddamn tooth and put a cap on that mothafucka yo!"

But when I showed up a week later (each day of which I had been trying to kill myself by overdosing on Aspirins, anything just to stop the pain!) the dentist rushed the administration of the anaesthetic, meaning it did not work immediately, and she was impatient like as if she was on commission or something. Meanwhile the dentists nurse was pushing her pelvis in my face, which was moderately amusing, but when the dentist started digging a hole to China in my cheek and I responded with a tiny little cringe she just point-blank chickened-out on me. I can't do the treatment; you'll have get the tooth pulled out, she said, or else go to a private dentist (likely to cost £2,000).

So I fired her, got a new dentist, a dude with normal social skills who referred me to a hospital where I could receive free dental surgery and reconstruction of my broken tooth. Walking home I was singing to myself: "I needed dental surgery because I am too young for dentures! I fought the NHS! And I won!" Back home in my sofa chilling (I had taken the day off), drinking Pernod (seriously best booze ever) and playing the new STAGNATION / CONTROL split EP (seriously best record ever), I noticed that a large chunk of my already fucked up tooth had just fallen off. Fuck sake. So I picked up the phone and told the receptionist at the dentist surgery "I've made up my mind! Lets just fucking do it! Lets take out the fucker!" A week later and the tooth is out. I am better now. I am 33 but already toothless. Of course, the moral of this story is: Brush your teeth, punx and skins!

***

Sometime in the early 1990s a friend had an idea to start a raw punk band with a local drunk (who was at least twenty years older than us). This drunkard had once played in a local hardcore punk band, way back in '83. The band's claim to fame was a rehearsal recording of a generic scorcher, which remarkably ended up with about thirty other Bullshit Detector type bands on some shitty world punk omnibus cassette tape that went through the tape trading circuits of the early 1980s. My mate had a copy of said tape, had noticed the name of our town on the inner and somehow managed to track down someone who had played bass in that band.

So we went to a party at a local skinhead's place—a drinking buddy of the old punk rocker and according to intelligence reports gained by my friend, the guy was going to show up later that evening. I remember smoking fags in the kitchen talking music with the skinhead who lived in the apartment. He claimed he had never heard of any of the bands I talked about—Black Flag, Discharge, G-Anx etc—trying to come across as a purist oi-punk who had only ever heard Cockney Rejects, Blitz et al (I was later informed that this was some sort of mind game, for of course the skinhead dude knew very well his punk and hardcore history, indeed it was said he had an impressive record collection!) But I kept at it, ranting about the greatness of Discharge, as usual, but all in vain.

Anyways, the punk dude finally turned up. Firstly, he looked like a proper stoner / hippie and he was fucking drunk as he rolled in the front door. He could barely talk, but my friend and I were fifteen years old and pestered to hear him talk about his old bands and about 1983 etc. The dude didn't remember anything, and it was as if we were talking to the wrong person but I guess our enthusiasm spilled over and he was basking in the glory we bestowed on him, who cares anyways? But hearing and seeing the dude I realized that the idea about the band that my friend was so pathetically desperately hopeful about wasn't gonna happen, ever. I left the two of them in the kitchen and went looking for booze to steal at the party.

Later that night my friend and I were informed that some out of town Nazi skins were coming to the party in fifteen minutes, having been invited by the skinhead, apparently, so all the punks and fellow travelers had to piss off quick as hell or else there things would get physical. By this time I was drunk and careless. I vaguely remember standing with the punk dude outside in the snow by the highway that separated the ghetto part of town where the party had been and the inner city where we were inevitably heading. Then I went off somewhere with a punk girl. I never saw the punk hippie again. I think he's dead now. This was a massive big time punk story. DIY!

***

Here's some news from the world of noise!

If you're anything like me you will have heard about Japanese noise punks THOUGHT CONTROL and you will remember the whispering campaign about them after a few blown-out live clips of them appeared on YouTube. Basically it was thought that THOUGHT CONTROL would be the new GERANIUM, if anyone remembers them. THOUGHT CONTROL have two songs on an old Japanese punk CD comp called *Heatrock* from a bunch of years ago and those two songs are the best thing ever!!!! The first song is one called something in Japanese that is about 9/11 with a chorus that goes "La la la la – Terrorista!" and sounding for the world like a mix of the best of CHAOS U.K., U.B.R. AND TOM & BOOT BOYS. The only one track mega hit that compares is EXPOSE 82's *Daily Life* on Nat Records' V/A – *Follow No Leaders*! LP comp from 1996 (a record you need and which is still available for super cheap)!!! The second THOUGHT CONTROL song is more of the same but a bit too long and consequently loses some of its power. THOUGHT CONTROL has also shared a cassette with EXTINTOS (anyone remember them? Caused a minor shit storm when their EP came out on Overthrow) called *Chaos Non Musika Vol.1* several years ago, but sadly it's a live recording that's hard to consume and besides on that release THOUGHT CONTROL are overshadowed by Extintos. The band's also on a live VHS compilation, and is assumed to have released some demos that no one knows about. But based on those two songs on the compilation, described above, this band shares a lot with CONTROL, in that they're a prolific live band that have been around for close to a decade without getting hyped to death in the west or at home domestically. I am not sure if anyone who reads *MRR* bothered to read my own zine—*More Noize*—but in one of the last issues I had a three page review of CONTROL's EP on Damaging Noise, where I was questioning why the record was released, speculating on how the band really sounds and generally whether the band is important for some reason or other. Well, you know CONTROL's side of the split EP mentioned above certainly validates that EP, and totally vindicates Fabian in releasing the record (although I hear the band actually never allow Damaging Noise Records to release that old live recording on the EP! Meaning that, yes, effectively the EP is a bootleg!). The two THOUGHT CONTROL compilation songs are so good that someone needs to book a flight, fly to Tokyo, track those cats down and force them to recording more shit like that and release it to a wider audience, now!

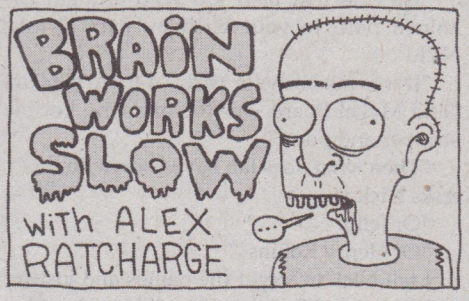
For pretty much all I said about THOUGHT CONTROL, the same could be said about PISTOL JOKE, another obscure chaos pogo poise punk band with relatively older punk who have been around for a fucking long time without anyone hearing about them. Now PISTOL JOKE has a CD-R demo that's not really great but showing promise (songs are too long and therefore acquire some sort of hypnotic quality that's totally not intended) but luckily PISTOL JOKE are on a new three-band-split record called *Don't Rely Gain It!!*

and they fucking own that shit! Three songs with extremely predictable song titles—"Daily Life," "Stinky Punks" and "Disorder," respectively—that are however the best shit since the heydays of EXPOSE 82/EXPOSE. Actually the more I listen to the PISTOL JOKE songs I am starting to hear EXPOSE!!!! Someone offer this PISTOL JOKE a record contract now!

***

I was given U.B.R.'s *Harmonija* CD as a present by a Chris who runs Velted Regnub. It's got everything you need to cure the pain from tooth extraction, trust me. If you really can't hack buying a CD then you're in for a treat because some Spanish label is releasing a LP called *Sen En Lep Dan Za Umret* that includes almost everything from the CD: LP excludes '83 demo and '84 live, but if you've got that Crust War demo 7" you should be covered (I actually need that 7" so hook me up someone!).

I get a lot of letters from *MRR* readers in the US. Some asking for my zine, others asking for my hand in marriage. In answer to the first, please check out Sam Richardson's excellent international DIY punk zine distro over at FEEL IT RECORDS, he prints foreign zines in the US and even do wholesale orders on foreign zines so kindly re-direct your penises and vaginas his way please. As for flattering comments of a sexual nature, oh please, you're making me blush already, who am I kidding, drop me a note here: slobodanburgher@gmail.com



I had planned a "funny" column for this month but the day before I was supposed to write it, the world suddenly became a lot less funny. Brendon Annesley, editor of one of the best zines ever (*Negative Guest List*, which had recently become an incredible label as well) passed away. He was 22 years old. I had met him when I was living in Australia; we hung out one night, and it was one of the weirdest and most memorable nights I had over there. After that we did a split zine together. He also later collaborated on my zine and I did a bunch of drawings for his. I felt honored and proud to work with him, because he was such a larger-than-life character, and one of those rare, rare people you knew was always doing things 100% from the heart. It seemed obvious to me that Brendon didn't give a flying fuck about status or being cool or all the bullshit that has been ruining music since before I was born. Perhaps even more importantly, he was an incredible writer, the kind of person who could write about absolutely anything and make it interesting and challenging. You just couldn't stop reading his words—they were intense, nervous, and they had a life of their own. This is very rare. This is something not everyone can understand. As a person who devotes a lot of time to writing, photocopying, and distributing fanzines, he was an inspiration, he made me feel like I was, maybe, just maybe, not in this alone.

This is a huge loss for anyone who knew him, anyone who read him, anyone who still believes in music as an intense, magical form of communication, rather than a business or a way to get laid. Like someone told me in an email, "I can't believe such a talented person is gone, what a fucking loss. And not just his talent as a writer, his enthusiasm, it's like a huge source of energy in the scene being taken away."

The day of his death, the third of February, I wrote the following to someone I know who was friends with him:

"It's the coldest day in ages here, it's minus fifteen degrees with a lot of dry, cold wind; I took a walk with a friend this afternoon, it felt like Siberia or something. As we were walking, I explained my friend why today was so sad. I explained to him that there's not many people with whom I like doing stuff, when it comes to writing, fanzines, etc., the things that matter to me. Doing these things can get pretty alienating, because not many people get it, and you're working alone in your room fighting the same old ghosts, and it's really rare (and really important to me) to find some real "partners in crime," people who you feel take this shit as importantly as you do. For me there is three people like that in France, and there is one in America... and then there's two in Australia...including Brendon. And that's it, six people in a world of six billions. Of course there are other people with whom I work on projects, but those six are the people that really inspire me and that I feel like I can count on to do things that will constantly motivate me. So I was telling my friend that, after a few hours of just staring at the computer screen trying to make sense of why I was feeling so sad, I figured that's because my world actually *is* a shittier place without Brendon in it. It feels smaller and less exciting. Because when it comes down to it, there is not many people like him in this world. That's a fact, and it fucking sucks."

I got as wasted as I could that night. It didn't make things better but, as I was puking my guts out in the toilet of my friend's apartement, all I was thinking was, rest in peace, mate.

Sadly, the time has come for my column to be no more. There are some big changes afoot in my life. I never expected things to go in this direction but never say never! OK OK OK, have I got your attention now? Do you want to know the big news?

I'm having a baby!

I know, right? It's completely wild and crazy. I had always thought—even believed deeply—that if I were to somehow ever get myself knocked up that I would promptly get rid of it. No question, no thought, just straight to the nearest abortion clinic. I never imagined an event like this would bring me such excitement and joy rather than terror and repulsion. It shocks me to think that for so long I believed that the murdering of innocent babies was OK! I'm so excited to get started on my new life!

I know I've said this several times before, I really thought I would be a total weirdo for life. You know, the whole idea that once you get past the age of 25 and you aren't at least headed towards normalcy than you're fucked for life, forever punk or whatever. I thought it was far too late for me to change, to get on the straight and narrow so to speak. How wrong I was!

Now I have this joy growing inside of me and for the first time getting married, moving to suburbia, and having a dog sound like the most wondrous things in the world.

I now look back on my years upon years of involvement in punk rock and cringe and shed a little tear. All of that wasted time! With this coming bundle of joy my life finally has purpose, I can finally see who I'm meant to be and what I'm meant to do. I'm supposed to serve my husband, to have and raise the most children I can, drive them to football practice, make meatloaf, and maybe some pudding for dessert.

With this bun in the oven my eyes have been opened to the real role women play in keeping society together. All those women I leave behind in punk rock are just deluding themselves, they've been brainwashed! Why would the man upstairs want you to live like that? Like I was so recently, they are all being controlled by the hand of the devil. What a shame. I feel so bad for them! When will they see the light? I feel so blessed that God finally decided to show me my true path.

Of course, the man who impregnated me plans to make an honest woman out of me and thank God—who wants to raise a bastard,

I mean really.

Even better, I get to be a housewife! The future hubbie has a good job and he's a hard worker; I can almost smell the bacon he's bringing home! I thought marriage was such a shame for so long, but it's such a beautiful thing really—devoting my life to one person, taking my husband's name, and joyfully letting go of my meaningless independence in order to help my husband to be the most wonderful man he can possibly be.

There are so many things that I regret about my past life (that's what I'm calling that embarrassing phase). I mean, now I can see clearly just how mislead I was! The government doesn't hold people down; they just need to work harder! And the police? So kind. They are giving their lives to protect us from the bad guys! Illegal immigration is wreaking havoc on our beautiful country. I mean, they are taking our jobs! Homosexuals? God does not want that depravity going on! And don't even get me started on those feminists—they are the worst!

So with that I submit my resignation from this rag of sin. Next week my fiancé and I are going to the kennel to get a dog (we need the practice) and then, house hunting! Though I do feel it would be beneficial to you people if I stayed here in order to show you the way, I know have bigger fish to fry. See you in the carpool!

"You've been doing *what*?" yells Nick, my stepfather, as we prepare to eat the thick and greasy Chinese food I just prepared in a wok my friend Jill just got me.

"Wok 'n' Roll" was the name printed on the bottom of it. Should have been "Punk Wok" instead. The thing died after just using it twice. Much like most good bands go to their musical graves after their second album.

Anyway, I start to tell Nick about my side-gig that went along with writing for *Maximumrocknroll* and other fanzines for all these years.

"This food is Egg salad!" says Nick, after taking a bite of the bok-choy, spinach, broccoli and mushrooms. "Egg salad" is our term for "Excellent!" We stole that term from Tommy Victor from Prong many years ago.

"This sucks!" I tell Nick as I take my first bite. Usually, I make great Chinese stir-fry—mellow, with a thin brown sauce and the vegetables cooked al dente. But no. This time Nick told me to add this Corn Starch stuff that made the earth's fine natural food into thick cement that tasted like an bulimic's seminal fluid and sperm.

"Barf!"

Nick explains to me that all the "great" Chinese food restaurants use the stuff to make the food have a better consistency as well as bring out more of the fine taste and aroma of the food before us.

I tell him that it's no wonder I hate the restaurants he likes. I mean, the places he chows down at also serve french fries & fried chicken. What the fuck.

"So," Nick says, bringing us back to our original conversation, "you mean you don't make your millions of dollars writing just for Xeroxed catalogues where you constantly brag about the size of your penis?"

"Don't forget the music, Nick," I say, "it's all about the music!"

"Oh yeah," says Nick," I forgot about the couple of million dollars you made off those two False Prophet albums!"

I ignore his rude remark.

He knows it was well *over* two million. Perhaps three, or even four. Anyway, I again start to explain to Nick that besides being an "all round punk rock guy," I dabbled in other forms of free expression.

"Like what?" asks Nick, as some of the bok-choy he is eating glues itself to the side of his cheek, which, *I know*, is gonna be a bitch to tear off.

"Politics," I reply.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," says Nick, "I know your mom and I enrolled you as a consciences objector at Riverside Church all those years ago when Reagan almost started the draft again. And the joke was you *love* to kill. In video games, anyway. I've never seen anyone so bloodthirsty."

"Not that," I tell Nick, "the other thing. The one I do with Mykel Board."

"That little bald guy who got you the female/male/female stripper at your bachelor party?"

"Don't forget the animal porn," I remind him.

"Man," says Nick, "I never knew eels could go in and out of holes so quickly. And that guy fucking the chicken until it died. Well, that was kind of upsetting!"

"What about when Hilly Kristal's son, "The Son Of The King Of Punk Rock" almost took off that strippers head until he saw he had boobs!" We both laughed, then talked about how that could have been a *very* bad situation, and was about one millisecond away from really happening.

"So, what is it that you and Jello do together, anyway?" asks Nick.

"I know you're eighty-two," I say to my stepdad, "but come on, you know the difference between Mykel, who writes for *Maximumrocknroll*, and Jello, who likes to scream about it."

"What about what's his face, Henry Rollins?" asks Nick. "He's not even a part of this conversation," I say.

"He should be," says Nick as he begins the painful process of pulling off the dried ground-born vegetable from his face.

"Why should Rollins be involved," I ask, as I feel his pain as the bok-choy removes some hair as well.

"Because, while he acts like he's all pissed at you for calling him names, I think he has a crush on you!"

I tell Nick that we did some push-ups together, and shared some dried worms. But that was *it*! "Anyway," I say, "As I was saying, Mykel and I were approached years about from some foundation in Washington DC about some "extra-work." It was because we were involved with Tim Yohannan, who back then was a well known socialist and had strong ties to the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party) and PETA (People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals)."

"Did he know Pam Anderson?" Nick asks?

"Did *who* know Pam Anderson?" I ask Nick.

"Ian McKaye," says Nick.

"Huh?"

"He's from Washington DC, was it because you knew him?"

"I said Tim Yohannan," I explain to Nick, "and how do you remember Ian's name, anyway?"

"Isn't he that bald kid who brought the animal porn to your birthday party?" asks Nick.

"It was my bachelor party," I try to explain, "and Mykel Board was the one who got the stripper and porn."

"Then what does Ian have to do with this?" Asks Nick.

"Or Jello?"

"Or Henry Rollins?"

I tell Nick to forget the names and just try to follow what I'm about to tell him about the thinktank Mykel and I got hired for, and how we have been secretly reporting Punk Rock's biggest secrets to the government for years."

"You mean like that Jello is gay?" Nick says.

"Not like that," I explain, "you know, the stuff about where protests were going to be held, and how RCP money was being channeled to weapons to arm militants in South America in the '80s to overthrow the United States government through S.H.A.R.P. (Skin Heads Against Racial Prejudice) skinheads and squatter punks."

"You never told me about any of that stuff," says Nick, with a sort of shocked look crawling across his face. "Actually, I have," I explain, "but I think you are having some memory trouble."

"It's you who can't remember shit," says

Nick, "Chicken John from Letch Patrol told me all about the acid you guys did when you were touring Japan. Hong Kong. I mean, China. Whatever!"

"We never went to China," I explain to Nick.

"Well you can certainly now make their food," he says.

"I think Mykel Board may have taught me a trick or two from his trips there," I explain, but not me."

"This Broccoli is good," says Nick, as he pokes a huge chunk upon his fork and eats it.

"*Anyway*," I continue, "Mykel and I were part of this think tank and..."

"Speaking of tanks," says Nick, "did you fix the floater in the back of your toilet yet?" I told him I did, and I learned it all from him.

"Good," says Nick, "I think *all* of this shit has gone right through me."

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

While I can't tell you how cool the new "Tetris" app is for the iPhone, or that Mario Kart 7 for the Nintendo 3DS rule, because of new rules around here, I can tell you that The Swa-Sisters from Berlin fuckin' rock! Three blonde-haired, blue-eyed babes in black leather, and their drummer is a guy who wears what looks like a prison shirt! Cool! Oh, their song, "I Don't Wanna Walk Around With Jew" is awesome!

UK UNDERGROUND PART TWO: THINK TWINK

For those of you who missed Part One: I'm talking about a small scene that existed in the UK from 1967 to the early/mid '70s. This scene, like it or not, helped birth punk in a big way, and while this is by no means even a complete (or, hell, even close to partial) guide, it's a bit of a start for those curious.

The very British are different from you and I. Indeed, it would take far too many pages and a mind much more able than mine to detail all the differences, from vast to niggling, between Anglo and American. America is a young country, relative to England at least, and as such we aren't subject to the heavy burden of tradition that our counterparts across the Atlantic are sidled with. It's easier for us to kick our fathers, to spit on our mothers because we don't have the same sort of centuries long addiction to embarrassment and steadfast appearance of placidity the English do. To be rebellious and British is to have broken the shackles of history. Either that, or insane.

The Beatles were polite. Regardless of the stories you've heard or read, they were, on the whole, fairly wholesome young gentlemen that the Establishment might create a bit of a fuss over, but by and large accepted. They were, after all, still wearing clean, matching jackets and while their hair did dangle a bit below the ears, they'd surely grow out of this eccentricity once the fad passed. The Rolling Stones fellows were a nuisance, sure, but nothing that a few lawsuits and drug busts couldn't handle, and what that couldn't take care of, the tax laws could.

There were, however, a few groups of decidedly less polite musicians shuffling around the backstreets of Britain. The genesis of these groups can be traced back to the same cavernous clubs that once housed the Beatles and Stones, and indeed one of the groups (the Pretty Things) were spawned from the Rolling Stones early lineup. However, something must have been at the bottom of their sloe gins fizzes, because the sound that these cretins produced is quite a bit different than "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds".

A small caveat before you continue: I offer a totally incomplete history. I'm not here to write a book, nor do I have much journalistic integrity, though I don't tell any really outrageous lies in this. I'm writing all this as a sort of advertisement for a corner of music that isn't discussed often, aside from maybe Hawkwind, but should appeal to those who like at least some of the music written about in this magazine. I know all types of people who enjoy these bands—they are not "garage" or "hardcore" or what have you. The MC5, the Stooges, New York Dolls and the Velvet Underground—this is who people point to as the forefathers of all this garbage we listen to. But there were Brits, too, making the same sort of noise, or at least making noise with the same sort of spirit, that their American comrades were (particularly the MC5, who played with some of these groups). Enough rambling—onwards !

It seems only appropriate to start with the subject of last months jack-off journalism: Mick Farren's band, the Deviants (originally the Social Deviants). The Deviants story begins in 1967. Serving essentially as a noise outfit for writer/musician Mick Farren's insane ramblings, their first, and I believe best album *Ptoof!*, came out that same year. The album is excellent—my favorite cuts being "I'm Coming Home" and "Garbage Man." The sound is a bit like an Anglicized MC5 and some of the weirder Velvet Underground, with the English white blues curse still lingering over certain segments of the playing. It was released by the band (financed, however, by a young heir that Farren must have tricked) and sold quite well through the back pages of the well-known "freak" newspaper *International Times*, before it was eventually co-opted and re-pressed by Decca Records. After a bit of a lineup shift (something that plagued all these bands), they shit out another record called *Disposable* featuring future Fugs-like almost-classic "Let's Loot the Supermarket." It's as good as the first, and some prefer it, though who these people are I have no idea. More lineup changes followed, and a West Coast tour, even, though I've seen absolutely no evidence that this actually occurred. The band claimed that Farren drove them nuts on the tour, and ditched him shortly after homecoming. Before they do this, however, they manage to release a third album, imaginatively titled *3*, which, like most bands later work, is primarily filled with turgid exercises and tired rehashes. There's a handful of decent tracks, though, and it's worth a purchase if you're rich, I guess.

Anyways, the actual band behind Farren, those Deviants themselves, decide to do-away with their curly-haired leader and start something of their own. Well, not entirely alone, and not entirely without a curly-haired leader, either. They enlist the services of a man named "Twink," who stands currently as my favorite rocker in all of history. He was in proto-psyche Tomorrow when they released the classic *My White Bicycle*, he was in the Pretty Things on *S.F. Sorrow* (my favorite record), played with T. Rex (albeit in a somewhat unofficial capacity) and later released one of my favorite singles of the '77 punk era as the Rings ("I Wanna Be Free" b/w "Automobile"). Anyways, he links up with the Deviants and forms the greatest group to come out of this period, the Pink Fairies.

Functioning almost like a British MC5, the Pink Fairies sound can be summed up in a single word: Attack! Their first single, "The Snake" b/w "Do It," is total madness on 45. "The Snake" is a hard-rocking number, like the Stooges through an Elvis grate. The real hit, though, is "Do It." The song is punk, plain and smiple, with a vein of motorcycle thuggery running through it. "It's Rock and Roll, and the message is DO IT!", who cares if it makes sense, it's total idiot-genius and that is punk. The first LP is called *Never Never Land*, with some awful psychedelic cartoon cover but don't let that trick you. From "Do It" to "Teenage Rebel" (later covered note-for-note by Annihilation Time on "II"), the record is aggressive and insane. Even the acoustic interludes are heavy. Their follow up, the ironically titled *What a Bunch of Sweeties* (because they were drug-taking sex freaks, get it?). It's almost more retarded than the first one. My favorite of the songs, "Marilyn," is a particularly poignant VD-lament, rather forward for the time and place.

Their final and finest record, *Kings of Oblivion*, was released in 1973. From start to finish, it's a raucous, insane affair. "I Wish I Was a Girl" remains one of my absolute favorite tracks ever recorded by any bands—it's perfect, almost. The opening track, "City Kids", is a direct precursor to the Motorhead beat that came out (indeed, Motorhead covers the song on *On Parole*), and not only because

the two bands shared a guitarist in Larry Wallis. Lemmy himself actually jammed with the Fairies on more than a few occasions, and the band he was in, Hawkwind played with them often. Hawkwind is a bit tricky to talk about in these pages; anyways, so much ink has been spilt over them elsewhere that I'm sure you've at least heard of them. Needless to say, Hawkwind has a rightful place in the canon next to the Fairies and the Deviants. One only has to listen to their "Urban Guerilla" (featuring the classic lines "Let's not talk of love and flowers and things that don't explode") to hear the striking similarities to the other groups. Their first five records are great and easily available. I'll deal with their punk outings in the next column, but don't get your hopes up.

But there were more than just bands. There was also a strong literary element in the UK Underground, which, while I don't have the space to go into much detail, is important.. I mentioned the International Times above, but that was just one of many underground papers around at the time. Michael Moorcock, the famous science fiction/fantasy author (creator of the Elric series), was closely linked to this scene, and even wrote a book about Hawkwind (not to mention a record). Many of the musicians also wrote; Mick Farren is now a well-known journalist and author, and is the name on the spine of the first Bomp book that came out, and you can find him in everything from Byron Coley fanzines to the UK Guardian. There was a large and quite important science fiction movement that sprung out of this general scene, centered around Michael Moorcocks New Worlds magazine. MRR isn't really the place to go into this sort of thing, but if you're a fan of the genre much of this work is at least interesting. A bit of literary digression: William Burroughs "performed" (though I'm not quite sure what that entailed) alongside the Deviants, Pink Fairies and MC5 at a Mick Farren-run free festival called Phun City in 1970. The Pink Fairies played naked and none of the bands got paid anything.

PART 3: PUNK coming next month!

Hey, Maximum. There's a store here called the Guitar Grave that's, like, a used guitar store—maybe they have new guitars too, I'm not sure—a trashy DVD rental place, and I think they sell used video games, PA equipment, fuckin', like, amps and probably all kinds of other stuff. There are all kinds of mysterious hallways toward the back of the store where it's not clear if you're supposed to go into them or not. The first time I was there I felt like I was totally trespassing, exploring ever onward into the labyrinth of the Guitar Grave, until I found myself in a room with price-tagged basses all over the walls. The Guitar Grave rules.

But like all stories about guitar stores, this is a story about misogyny.

So when I first got to this town, I meant to check it out, I was like, "cool, that is a good name for a store!" But I didn't get there for a while because I was working in this bookstore that ate my soul, so all I had the emotional energy to do when I wasn't at work was either cry or watch *Cloverfield*, over and over and over. It was pretty gross. But eventually, I went to check it out, and as the guy who seemed like he was probably the owner was showing me around, like explaining how to join the DVD club and stuff, this Dork came in. I sort of half noticed that he was creeping around the edges everywhere I was, while dude was showing me around, because that is the kind of thing that happens when you read as a girl in a guitar store, creepy dudes fuckin' creep. Eventually, dude was done showing me around—he was super nice, he said he played in a band called Pigboat and I was like, "what kind of music is it?" and he was like, "loud," a strong answer—and I started poking around un-chaperoned.

See, Francesca gave me a bass right before I left the Bay and moved all the way across the country, but I didn't have an amp for it, and I was like "I bet I could find a piece of shit amp that only half works, anyway, because it's not like I'm gonna start a band here, I'm just gonna make up songs and record them with this sick USB microphone my girlfriend gave me." I hadn't even found the bass amps before Dork (actually, let's call him Creep) fucking cornered me and started telling me about his band.

"You could be the bass player in my band," he started explaining.

I hadn't actually said anything to Creep about playing bass. In fact, in my last band, Angela Chase, I had played guitar, and I was amp-hunting 'cause I was convinced that now that I didn't have a band, I didn't need fuckin' anybody, I could play all the instruments. (Ladies can be Mysterious Guys! Whatever!)

But maybe you didn't know this: I rule at playing guitar. I'm awesome at it. I mean, I can't keep a beat, but that's why we play with fuckin' drummers. I've been playing guitar for a thousand years and a couple years ago I realized that I didn't know how to just drop anything super impressive when it was time to be super impressive—the octave chords from "Condition Oakland" are cool but they don't blow minds—so one afternoon, while I was living at the Fork In The Rode in Oakland (RIP, beautiful anarchafeminist collective dream house), I sat myself down and learned a bunch of the complicated Jimi Hendrix shit.

For a while, it was interesting to be a girl who totally rules at the guitar and go to, like, Guitar Center, because all the teenage boys who are stumbling their way through the beginning part of Enter Sandman literally fucking die if they see you play the riff from that Converge song "Dark Horse," and killing teenage boys, I'm not gonna lie, is cool. But after about twenty minutes, having all the attention in the guitar store gets super old. One year I found myself not owing anybody any money when my tax refund check came in, so I bought a fuckin' used Telecaster. I was so stoked, dude. I was like, "I am gonna play some fucking Prince shit or something, I don't even know, I'm going to be the lesbian Bruce Springsteen (Melissa Etheridge, think about it), check out my sick Brad Paisley chops." But the thing wouldn't intonate right! Meaning, you could put it in tune down by the cowboy chords, but then it wouldn't be in tune up in the Eddie Van Halen region. I was like, "aw man," and brought it back into Guitar Center to have them set it up, and duder was like, "nah it sounds okay to me."

"You can't hear that those two notes are different?" I would ask, playing harmonics at the fifth and seventh frets and then a normal octave with an open string.

"Nah, I don't think so," he would say again. "I mean I can take it in and have our guy set it up, but it sounds OK to me."

"I know more than you and you are wrong," was the subtext of everything Guitar Center dude said, every time I brought that guitar back, and I brought that guitar back in literally five times before I was like "fuck this, dude, your guitar tech sucks, and look, mostly all this bravado is a coping mechanism to make the misogyny I have to deal with every day even sort of bearable, so in reality it's hard for me to believe that my ears have developed a better sense of pitch than yours, but I can't think of anything else that might be going on, so please just give me my money back." By that point I think I was probably in debt again, anyway.

I don't know though, maybe that's what happens when dudes bring in guitars that won't intonate properly, too, I don't know. Even if it is, fuck the guy who claims to adjust intonation at Guitar Center.

Anyway, so there I was, in the Guitar Grave, a brilliantly talented guitarist, looking to buy an amp, cornered by a Creep who was convinced that I was going to be his Hot Bassist. I didn't even want to plug into an amp, because fuckin' creep was just going to stand there and judge my bass playing, right? Which sucks. In a perfect world we would have had an epic guitar battle and he would

have died, but I knew that in this shitty world a guitar battle wasn't going to be an option, and plus, also, if I had plugged into an amp and played some killer licks, dude would have gotten an even bigger, harder boner for getting me to be the bass player in his imaginary band. So I didn't plug in a guitar. I didn't even try to figure out where the bass amps were. I just kind of wandered around the labyrinthine guitar store, telling Creep I wasn't going to be in his band, hoping he would listen to me and go away. He didn't though. He told me all about the guitar he was going to get: the same one as the guy from Goldfinger. (This happened in 2011.) He told me all his ideas about the band he was going to start, which were stupid. Eventually, when I stumbled into the secret bass room, he was like "OK, show me what you've got," which made me feel less like playing music than literally anything else in the world ever has. There was no way in hell I was going to try out a bass amp, with a bass, while Creep was staring at me! I was like, "nah, I'm going to go home," and bailed.

On my way out the door the guy from Pigboat was literally like "hey, come back soon, it should be less creepy in here next time," which was legitimately funny (the guys who work at Guitar Grave are not creeps, as far as I can tell), but also, fuck everything and everyone, burn, destroy, Armageddon cannot come soon enough.

Three months later I went in again. Creep wasn't there, and I found a half-broken bass amp that they agreed to sell me for forty bucks. That's what I play in my band Correspondences now. (I decided to play bass in this band half on a whim and half because playing bass is hella fun when creeps aren't demanding that you to do it because you're a girl. Also half because the only other string instrument is a cello and cello plus bass is a lot of bass and bass is cool.) It's not that loud though, because it is all fucked up and broken, but a while back somebody gave me this pedal, like one of those fancy, multi-effects, plastic Zoom pedals that can do a ton of shit, and I realized: one thing distortion pedals can do is make amps louder. So I went *back* to the Guitar Grave a couple more months later to see if they would sell me a plug for it. (I learned in high school that fucking around with batteries in distortion pedals is a fool's errand.) And they did! *However. Fucking Creep Rolled Up While I Was Buying It.* And he said the most dismissive, bullshit misogynist thing anybody has ever said to me while I was in a guitar store:

"How's the guitar playing coming along?"

"Oh, pretty good," I said. "Same as it has been for twenty years. How's being a misogynist dickbag who spends more time imagining he's in Goldfinger than learning to play music coming along?"

I was ready this time, too. It's not like I don't carry a knife. So I jumped up, slit his throat, carved a bunch of arcane alchemical and astrological symbols into his face and eyelids and over his heart and across his palms, lit his corpse on fire, and had the guy behind the cash register take a cameraphone picture of me, kneeling behind dude's flaming corpse with my palms up, like that famous picture of Jimi Hendrix with the guitar on fire in front of him. It was my Facebook profile picture for a while, but then, eventually, even though it was a moment of personal success, I didn't want to be reminded what a stupid, misogynistic world we live in every time I logged into Facebook. So I changed it back to the one where I've got the plate of clementines and the cigarette, out in front of the gay center in San Francisco, giving Alyx (who's outside the frame) the finger.

I dunno, if you want to talk about it, email me at imogen@keepyourbridgesburning.com.

Sometimes I get paid to write about music, and it's the single most flattering exchange I can imagine for a publication to place a monetary value upon my opinion, but along with such flattery comes an insidious gust of entitlement and self-importance. Publishing fanzines was my foray into critical writing, and I've labored over sheets of cut-n-paste, type-written and Xeroxed debauchery throughout my paid "music journalist" experience. In fact, my first paid writing gig was offered after an editor read a copy of my zine. Retaining the urgency and rough character of fanzine writing is what I strive for when composing pieces for other publications, otherwise I'll become just like the innocuous, failed "serious" journalists that the industry is fraught with.

Whenever paid music journalism begins to inflate my ego, an issue of *Negative Guest List* would set me straight. Compared to *NGL*, my fanzine is absolutely useless and my other journalism is fucking embarrassing. I didn't know him personally, but read anything Brendon Annesley wrote. It's evident that he let punk and hardcore drench his psyche like a caustic baptism, and summoned the words to articulate his experience with fiery abandon.

Bangs' raucous screeds, Greil Marcus' illumination of rock'n'roll's enduring mystique, and Simon Frith's exploration of pop music's deep social ramifications all inspired me to begin writing about punk, but Brendon Annesley's work ethic motivated me to continue. Annesley is part of the rock journalism's grand tradition; the only thing separating him from those stalwart titans is lineage.

I didn't intend for Brendon Annesley to be the topic of this column. Much has been written since his passing by those who knew him much better and worked with him in a much closer capacity than I did; I encourage readers to seek out their thoughts. Of course, if you aren't familiar with *Negative Guest List*, I advise you to rectify your ignorance immediately.

The originally intended beginning of this column commences now.

Quotes taken out of context, critical acclaim, ulterior biased reviews, personal attacks, tedious interviews, lies, posturing, elitism and malicious agendas are a small selection of music journalism's negative aspects from the last however many decades. As far as writers focused on punk, sour pens have published more heinous and irresponsible features than the underground press of any other genre. It's not surprising either, considering the sheer amount written about punk by fans from every social and educational background, that such incompetent drivel has characterized punk publications for decades, but that coarseness is exactly what gives the punk press its enduring character.

Punk is inherently non-professional. No matter of training or industry status gives one punk's opinion clout over another's. The notion that a teenager's declaration of an unknown band's genius in his Xeroxed fanzine is just as viable to the punk milieu as Pitchfork's grandiloquent praise is to the ennui of modern pastiche popper's is profoundly empowering.

Of course, great journalism has been published in zines as well, but the inspired and careless writing is often more amusing. When gleaning content from old zines, often the sloppiest and most short-sighted writing is the most memorable. Negative reviews of albums that are now universally considered "classic" should also encourage new bands to shirk the negative reviews their own records might receive. Acclaim in a zine isn't necessarily without benefit, but the wildly varying and polarizing dissent within the punk press should be celebrated. It's a reflection of the visceral reactions punk evokes and fans' urgent need to share their opinions.

Mikel Toomb's review of *London Calling* by The Clash in an issue of *Kicks* from 1980 reveals some common gripes from punks at the time that seem pretty hysterical in hindsight. It begins by deriding the album for its lack of overt political militancy compared to their earlier LPs. The Clash's politics were pretty pedestrian compared to their anarcho peers, but for Toombs, they epitomized politicized English punk and the more conceptual *London*

Calling was their banal, slick, and passive abandonment of relevant political ideology.

Today, reviewers still criticize for venturing beyond their initial formula. Writers tend to frame a band's stylistic departure as a betrayal of the group's principles, when it is in fact a simple divergence from the reviewer's taste. Toomb's critique of *London Calling* for its apolitical leanings is reminiscent of an interview with Cheap Trick's Rick Nielsen in an issue of *Zig-Zag*, an English rock magazine, in 1978. Adrian Thrills, the interviewer, who is biased towards English punk bands that "take a stand against repression," is annoyed by Nielsen's sardonic dismissal of political bands. Nielsen mentions that the American press never inquires about politics, but Thrills write-up considers little else. His expectation of Cheap Trick to take a political stance and his claim that "all Mid-American rock lacks any semblance of meaning," reveals a severe ignorance of Cheap Trick's aesthetic.

So, writers have always projected their desired characteristics upon a band, and criticized them for falling short of their expectations. Today, with the type of music that falls under the punk and garage being of an incredible variety, reviewers are even more likely to be confronted with sounds that are completely foreign to them, despite an interest in punk. The varieties of punk covered in *MRR* are far more vast than they used to be, and it reviewers are given a choice. W can let their bias shine, and pen opinionated, brutal reviews, hopefully with wit and a compelling angle, or we can seek objectivity without abandoning critical character.

Columns, selections from *Degenerate* fanzine and writing for lesser publications can be found at www.degenerateephemera.blogspot.com. Contact me at degeneratezine@gmail.com. Please get in touch if I can assist with any plans to commemorate Brendon Annesley or *Negative Guest List*.

Let Them Be Punks!

Sometimes when our heads are too far up our own asses, even when we are right we are just right about our own situations. Despite the much-talked-about global-ness of punk, and despite all the politics, it's still a scene with so many fucked up assumptions—but for a lot of us in other parts of the world, they're not the ones you may think.

One of my old bands once got a review that praised us, but also said he expected something worse because of our nationality. I didn't understand it as being racist, cause we Europeans are like this. Al Burian wrote about one of my other bands, that we could be huge in Europe if we were Americans. Look, your location matters. Saying otherwise is a lie. If you live in the Northwestern part of Europe you can reach four-to-six different countries within few hours that get "big coverage" in the punk press. You play a decent show in Germany and the message boards will be all over you. Then you'll be able to tour the whole of Germany. Later some label will want to release your records, you'll have cool live shots of your gigs all over the place, some YouTube videos and that's it. You made it. This sounds so cut-and-dry professional but it's true. We are somehow this professional.

But it's not just punk rock marketing—your location matters in how all of us do our punk as well—and on every level: as fans and as participants; how we consume and produce our music; our perspectives and our ethics.

What I will talk about now is the arrogance in punk rock—or more specifically, arrogance in "first world" punk rock, because there is a difference. And when it's going on it's blind as fuck. An easy example is how nowadays with gourmet food being all the rage, these gastro nazis could make you feel bad if you are not eating food that is in the best quality or prepared as it's done in a top restaurant. But you have to eat; otherwise you die. And if you are punk you have to be punk, you have to put out, you have to get, you have to go. But for some of the most die-hard "punks" I run into, animal rights is important as long as they can consume the same exact taste that is made out of something without a nervous system. Watch them try to teach a poor person (or poor punks for that matter!) in my country how to eat healthier or more ethically—it's totally embarrassing!

Sometimes it's really just more important what we do than how we get it done. There were bands on the road, way before emails, not just before Facebook, but it also wasn't usual that your friends could go out on tour with only a demo or an EP and sleep around squats and eat overcooked pasta with ketchup. It's cool if I type in Sex Vid into google and the only thing I will encounter is making me wash my hands five minutes later, but who needs the internet when the biggest fanzine in the world is your devoted fan? It's easy to play the "I don't care" card when the world cares about you. There's a whole made up genre of bands who are hard to trace but got the hype. It's easy not to say a word when everyone is just waiting for you to speak.

But if you never were on the map then you've been born invisible. I have booked three tours by myself through long months, a million e-mails and bending over maps with a gas calculator and many of the shows through friends whose bands I've booked here in my town. But without social network sites we couldn't have ever kicked off. Without Myspace or Facebook I couldn't have booked bands that helped me later, and whose members have become my good friends. And yet this a total first-world luxury to be able to eschew these things and say "fuck Facebook" and try to exist "under the radar" and still be able to tour, put out music, etc.

The fixation with the format of our music is another example of this "let them eat cake" mentality. Look, I get it. Vinyl is punk and tapes are coming back as well. CDs are crap, MP3s are slacking. And it's true. As an owner of some vinyl I agree—records are great and they are the best. They are magic. And to be honest it was a painful job when I spent three days cutting worn out mix tapes to the same exact length or dubbing our demo over day-worth dubs of MTV's *120 Minutes*, but they looked awesome and I was proud of my work. I always looked on our CDs as crap but that was our only chance!

Because you know what? Here where I live there's no vinyl making. Because the industry—like everything else in the communist-era—was owned by the state, so after the collapse the record plants got shut down and never reopened. And it's actually illegal here to make and sell materialized records if you don't register your songs. So even old farts who are somehow equipped to make you 12" plastic discs in their basements for a ridiculously high price are scared cause you have to "own" your songs first. But who wants to do that? The closest place to get records pressed otherwise is the Czech Republic where if I order 500 copies of 7" (which I will never sell cause I'm in an unknown band from Eastern Europe) I have to pay like four dollars each! That's a lot of money here! And we didn't even start talking about the cost of the cover and packaging! Then consider I also live far from bigger (read: richer) cites and have to work a lot so touring beyond one or two weeks means losing my job or I just simply won't eat for the rest of the month. We don't have a label cause we can't tour that much so no one knows about us, or really would care because, again, we're from an unfashionable place in the eyes of the tastemakers... I could go on and on, but I don't want to make this a sob story about me...

So when someone says they don't listen to CDs cause it's way too easy to make them, I get fucking angry. Yeah, burning a CD is an easy job, but writing the songs that are on that shinny fucking plastic maybe took fucking months you idiot. You are fixating on the dumb format and covering your ears to a band who rot at their rehearsal room, spent many long months to make songs you shrug away just because it's on a CD? Yeah, it feels better to be put out on vinyl cause that means someone with money cares enough about your music to put it out. But you can dub a

tape at home, you can burn a CD at home, and from our perspective, doing these things at home gives us the feeling of we've gained something already.

It's like getting published in *MRR*: Would it change what I'm saying if this was just another post on my blog? So this is arrogance as well. My friends were kinda proud and happy when they made it into the pages of *MRR* in a scene report. But (like almost all the scene reports) I wrote it on my own, not as some "beat reporter" for MRR. Nobody asked me to write it. So what was significant about it? They already knew what I thought about them. Again, being validated matters, but the look doesn't change what what's being said, or the content that's being covered.

It's the same thing for me with owning records. I like to own them. I like the covers, the smell, the stories, the feel I had when I bought them. It was a religious moment when I first heard "Where is my Mind" by the Pixies on vinyl. Something in my chest started levitating. And it was amazing to be 80% blind from booze at a record-listening house party but finding the right record and putting it on. Singing Nerves songs drunk with a guy who looked like a bad guy from a French cartoon, showing him the lyric sheet with lines about my love life; the next morning watching my host put all his LPs back in order and stare at record covers for long hours…

These things are cool but owning things is also a cultural headhunt—putting things on the shelves like trophies. We feel like they represent us like the shirts we wear. Not just to other people but to me as well. I'm being reminded how awesome I am constantly. I look at my shirt and I feel great cause I own a shirt like this, I like a band like this, I listen to a band like this so I'm something like this. I look good, my room looks good, I feel great cause my thoughts look great. But buying records is not easy! When I mailorder records from where I am the postage price doubles the price of my record! And many places don't even ship here! There's not a single good shop or distro in here either. So while I love distros—browsing through them drunk and just finding something I have to have, driven by pure and delirious instincts—I still listen to most of my music in mp3 anyway. So why is it different or any worse?

Sometimes when I speak about records I feel like cheating when I say I have them cause I only really have them in digital format. But I still have feelings for them. They made me happy, angry, or sad. I know these records, I like them, I listen to them. And they sound the same. I mean, not really, but who cares about 'bit rate' when you are listening to Perdition or Lebenden Toten! I think actually the shittiness of crappy mp3s might even make them more evil, fragile, bedroom-ish and punk. Or maybe not. I don't know! I wanna know though. Cause after all I hear them from a source but I hear them in my head too, and that's where it matters most.

I remember being a kid thinking that if they translated all the comic books I would buy them all, but wondering at the same time, where would I keep them? There is not enough space in my room. But now I love music. I'm a music nerd but I can't be a record geek cause if I wanna buy punk records I would have to stop being a punk and be someone instead who earns lots of money—so someone who basically is a fucking asshole—just to be able to house all these records! Some people say they only listen to their LPs, meaning they stopped caring for new music. So they stopped being a punk and instead they just like to listen to punk bands they used to like, and by limiting their curiosity they can buy all presses and colors of the beloved totems of their youth, while I know that I will never own all the records I like.

Another thing: maybe what we do is secret but sometimes we just practice this line way too serious and we create more secrets than necessary. 90% of the bands say they are here for getting their message out. Sharing their stories, their frustration, making other people think or feel less alienated. But yet while most bands have their own presence or coverage on the internet, barely anyone is sharing their lyrics there. It has become yet another privilege of the record buyers to go through the lyrics sheets – and you know what? I don't think most of them even do! And this is the essence of first-world punk privilege and arrogance—not even really taking advantage of it!

But it's true, even when I have the mp3s of a record I love, I still I miss the damn thing. Not the chance to see the matrix message, or put it on the shelf and feel great that I "own" it, no—it's the lyric sheet. The message that I know I don't know. Even born speakers of English have doubts about specific lines and why would it hurt to share your own lyrics on your own platform on the internet? We are part of a message and thinking-based subculture but the main message of the music is hidden or relies on our pockets' credibility? Sounds pretty fucked up to me.

All of us who these typed-in thoughts concern—we wanna read the lyrics, hold the records—ours and others'—we want go on tour without dealing with lame corporate internet band profiles. Some people out there are able to have all these things and even more. But they should never forget that they are lucky to be like this. Yeah, your location matters, but how you deal with it matters even more.

vargyai.viktor@gmail.com
punkersblock.blogspot.com

THE DICKTATOR

mariam bastani

I moved here two years ago to do this job, no other reason. I never thought I would leave Chicago because, frankly, I have been a lot of places in the world, but my opinion still holds strong that Chicago is the fucking best.

I spent my first year in SF hating it. The "Cali" style of communication, the way people here handle conflict (or lack of, I should say) and general "flakiness" really pisses me off. All my friends here from back east, Midwest or even L.A. joke about it. There is also the mass gentrification in Oakland of which no one seems to give a fuck about, the violence against people of color all over the Bay Area ranging from economic to physical, the racist glaze over San Francisco and the "liberal" entitlement that makes "activists" fear and treat the people they are "speaking for" like shit. I could go on… The late great Bruce Roehrs gave me lots of pep talks and gifted me with some positive, insightful conversation for which I will be eternally grateful.

I loved the job of coordinating here at *MRR*, but I really hated San Francisco and the Bay. After a while I started to lighten the fuck up and notice the positive things that make this area unique from other places I have been. While I admittedly view this place often as some sort of weird exhibit at a Disney park complete with surfer and skater caricatures, there are some pretty amazing things about the city. I have made some great friendships and gotten turned on to things uniquely San Francisco. I kept finding redeeming qualities in many places. Well, all places except in punk.

Don't get me wrong, the punk scene here is huge—huge and long running. There have been generations of punks that have paved the way making the scene what it is today. The history is a long one with crazy sordid events, inspirational people and a long trail of music to follow, all of which I am eternally grateful for. Punk is ageless here; there are bands here with nineteen year olds playing with thirty five year olds. There are shows all the time and there are a bunch of micro scenes that are active and constantly making more music. Getting a Bay Area scene report has been difficult because of the sheer size of the punk scene here. The trajectory is dizzying. Great bands, records, shows, tours, DJ nights, events, on and on… I am not complaining. The fact that I can see bands that I like all the time, is not something I take for granted. Does it make people lazy? Sure, sometimes, but I am not that person. While all this is happening, I didn't feel like I was represented here much, so I did what all punks should do when they feel that way—start a band. Replace the word "band" in that

last sentence with zine or venue or anything else and that is what punk is all about.

It wasn't until the last few months that I really started liking the Bay Area for what it was. I miss home and my likes and dislikes about this area don't necessarily even out, but there are some things here that are just better. While I could go into a list of things that are great, but I have to give credit to one band here that sort of kick started my appreciation. That band is Culture Kids.

Now before people start saying shit like, "oh boy… here comes another *MRR* hype band," just slow the fuck down. This is not a hype band; this is a local band that, for me, is a representation of why I love current punk in SF and the Bay. This is a group of dudes that I imagine skate, skate, surf, party and turn out a sound that reminds me that no matter how big the punk world is, local punk is where it's at for me. These are mostly long haired, stoner looking punk kids that wear flannel and don't say much. I bought an LP from one of them at their last show and the kid was so humble that it threw me a bit. Their first 7" came out in 2010, and while it was good, their sound didn't hit me until I saw them live. Their energy, their awkwardness, their weird calm mixed with raw power. It's a good feeling to see a band go off in this odd mix of sedation and energy (were they high? Who knows?)… It's a sight that is welcoming and threatening at the same time. In *all* outward appearances, these dudes are pretty opposite to me, but there is one universal feeling I get from their live show. Culture Kids are at home playing in this band, and that feeling bleeds into me while simultaneously making me what to break everything in the room. For once all the fucked up shit about me that has made me punk makes sense here. San Francisco can be home.

After many years of being a punk, there is nothing more exciting to me as local bands playing for and in their scene. It's crazy to me when bands move from the city they are from as a band. I know that I am speaking from a viewpoint that is altered; I came from a large city and moved to a large city. I started out in Waukegan IL though and you had better believe that we had and still have a punk scene there. When Rich Gutierrez from In Disgust did his San Jose scene report a while back, he made the point that I am trying to make, appreciate your local scene, build it up—make it yours.

Raw punk here is exploding. There is a group of punks, Radical Punks Never Die, who have a screen-printing business; they are putting out records, doing shows and more. Even if you aren't into that sort of punk, the stuff they are turning out, their level of energy and the amount of activity is impressive. Not only are these people making punk in their own genre, but have started mixing up shows to include different sounds within punk. There is a general distrust and apprehension with punks here between scenes. It's totally justified, because the scene is huge and may people's politics do not mix. I guess growing up in a place where "Freedom of speech," is an actual reality make people pretty careless when they are spouting some ignorant uninformed shit ("Racism is not a problem in the Bay Area punk scene!"), but hey, that's where people like me come in… I love a challenge.

Local bands I have been into lately: Sister Fucker, Effluxus, Stressors, Mugwort, Replica, No Statik, Hunting Party, Displeasure, Neon Piss. I am sure I am missing a bunch, but whatever sort of punk you are into, there is a band here for you.

So I want to say thanks to Culture Kids. Because of them, I have a greater appreciation for the Bay Area punk scene. It's huge and active and musically diverse (if not diverse in other ways…). While I started out hating this place, it has become a place I really appreciate. As the kids I used to tutor at my community center would often say, "Don't hate, appreciate." I will never lose the hard edge that Chicago has endowed me with, but at least I know that it has a place here.

Last thing, I want to say that sending my love and support to the friends and family of Brendon Annesley. It's a great loss.
mariam@maximumrocknroll.com

Things that have happened since I moved out of the *MRR* house... I got consumed by Thomas Pynchon's writing, I got to have one inspiring conversation with Charles from My Mind's Eye records in Cleveland about that city's legendary musical legacy, and I have been collecting books by the women in the Weather Underground and other similar 1960s lady insurrectionists, so maybe I will have a one girl book club this spring and summer. Bonnie Bremser's book! *Troia;* you gotta… I listened to Ultravox's *Ha Ha Ha* LP obsessively, and then got into Eno's *Taking Tiger Mountain.* Though right now I am listening to a demo by Quango, who apparently feature members of the Apostles, Oi Polloi and Hygiene and despite this mixed bag of musical legacies are fucking great! soundcloud.com/natkingdole/sets/quango-demo/ Check it out!

I can see the ocean from my window nowadays and it's hard to leave this room, a million books and records to look through and listen to without the threat of "I should be editing that eleven page scene report." Instead: Peter Blake art book found on the street, Danny Lyon photography book scrimped and saved for, boxes of old zines from Tobi's *Jigsaw* to Pettibon's, the detritus of an obsessive's life! I also have amassed a collection of skateboards from various points in my life, and Skate Summer: The Revenge is being planned for as I type. I skated to work last week, from *MRR* to North Beach; only got stressful when I got to Chinatown and shit got too hectic for this ancient crone. At any rate, we have a new coordinator moving in to the compound sometime in April, Lydia is her name, and her interview was easily the most inspiring I have ever conducted in my five years here! I will still be coordinating until then, and will still be involved in the magazine, but hopefully will at that point have more time to do all the other super important stuff I have planned for life post-*Maximum Rocknroll* like skateboarding and reading and... yeah. It seems like most ex-coords have gone onto grad school!? Cissie is in a sick new band called the Stops that you should check out instantly: thestops.bandcamp.com. I think it's all lady? Whatever, it's fucking raging!! I need a tape and they need to play SF pronto. Golnar is also in a raging all lady HC band, In School, who I think only have You Tubes of shows right now?! But they are great and Bidi the singer is a gnarler... Justin is in a band called Hunting Parties that are playing shows round the Bay a lot, they have a tape and a 7" coming out soon. People leave the magazine and form sick hardcore bands? Well Chris has been playing extra guitar for Brilliant Colors who are my favorite powerviolence grind destruction force of all time. Me and Mariam are planning out our future band as I type, well our secretaries are gonna do lunch and see what they can come up with.

Brilliant Colors just played a show with Bleached and Veronica Falls, which was great... Well, it was a strange all ages show that was as full of excited teenagers as it was industry types, a weird crowd. Veronica Falls were amazing, I totally recommend seeing them play. I love their 7"s, but sorta wanted the LP to blow me away in a manner that it did not, but their live show was just killer... total dreaminess. Bleached were disappointing, they had some random session musician dudes playing bass and drums, and it was a definite band ruiner. Serious "Social D circa 1999 at the House of Blues in Anaheim" vibes emanating off of both dudes. The Clavin sisters should hire two other blondes and just be the blonde Cali girl Ramones. I think they would have more of a chance of making it that way than with random Guitar Center specimens. But what do I know of the machinations of music biz get rich quick schemes? Not too much! I would rather listen to X_X (John Morton band not rotten blogrocker bullshit!) and feel hateful than be in some band that is only making money because they play shitty corporate branded events or the year end party for a cell phone company, and so forth. Living the rock'n'roll dream. I am sure that is what making it in rock'n'roll is nowadays, just aligning yourself with a huge conglomeration, being a musical billboard shrilling your phony teenage dreams along side their synergistic corporo-message. Boo hoo to the music industry and to all the weird desperate capitalist creeps that require it to achieve their princess rescue narratives.

At any rate, I would much rather Bleached songs be in the boring blogger hit parade than like... Best Coast, but I would also rather listen to the Hitler SS/Tampax split and call it quits. Whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com/Layla@maximumrocknroll.com

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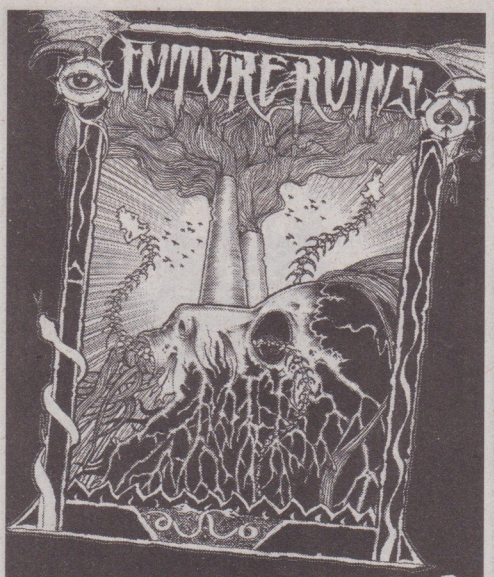

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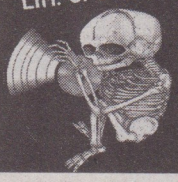

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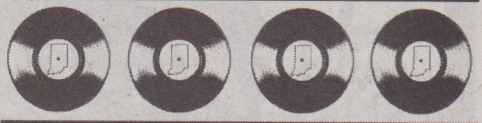

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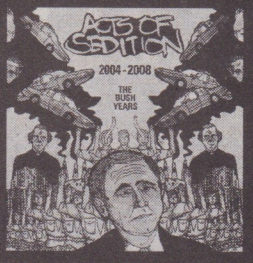

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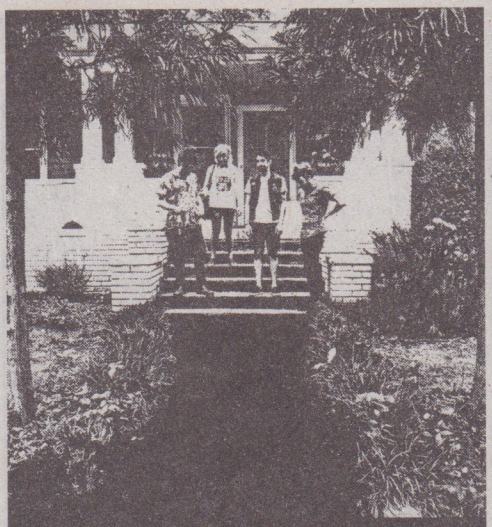

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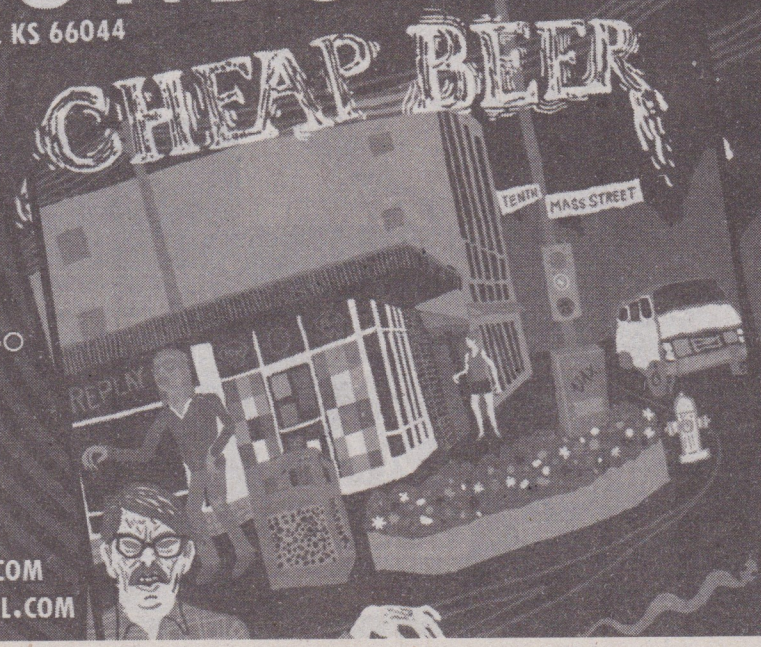

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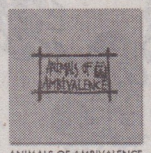

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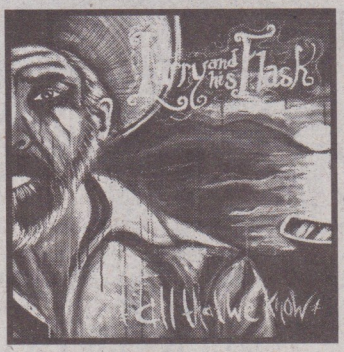

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NEWS

NEWS COMPILED BY CEBE BARNES

BRENDON ANNESLEY 1990-2012

By DX

From the first, I knew Brendon Annesley as a writer. He'd ordered some Straightjacket Nation records, we'd exchanged frequent emails about our mutual admiration for the Homostupids and other examples of modern rock opera, and eventually we collaborated on a fanzine together after I read his hardcore zine, *Dirty Alleys, Dirty Minds*, and recognised in his writing the same noble heritage I'd attempted to claim in *Distort*—Bangs, Meltzer, Laughner, Tosches, Kickboy, Coley. Cruel and sharp spill.

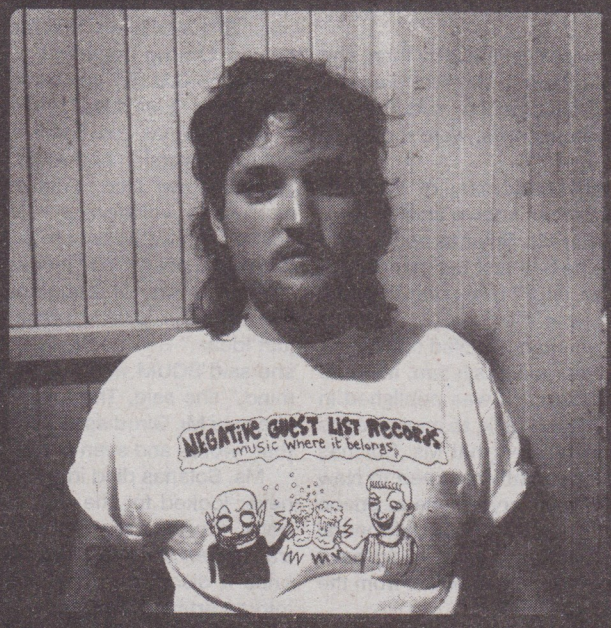
There was a generation of young Australian writers who'd grown up on the internet kicking out fanzines every single week at the time, the majority illiterate, unreadable, no humor, instantly forgettable. Criminal for their mediocrity. They should have blogged it. Brendon had courage and confidence in his writing from the first sentence. I was in awe of his talent. And, he worked at it, and he worked hard.

And he didn't stop working from that point til today. Writing about the music of others. Making music of his own. Taking his discerning taste for guitar savagery and schadenfreude to operating a label that asserted itself as dependable, immediately.

Watching him develop as a writer was rewarding. Getting to know him as a mate is what is killing me right now. We met outside a Straightjacket Nation show in Brisbane. I knew this kid Brendon was going to be at the show with a stack of our fanzines in his bag, and I kept spotting this golem creeping the corner, shooting wary glances around, finally concluding that there is no way this outsider could not be Amphetamine Addiction (as he called himself in *DA/DM*). His energy was all over the place, no doubt buzzing on something and lagging on something else at once, unable to hold a sentence together, very nervous. The typical image you have in your mind of a teenage hardcore fanzine editor: pale and spindly, awkward. We talked a little, but it was impossible, and he ran off after we played.

Over the next couple years, each time I saw him he was more approachable and considerate in discussion, which is to say he was more aware of himself, even when he was wasted, as he invariably was. Good company. A top bloke, a very sensitive young man who loved to talk about the fine music, films and comedians that most people avoided. He was passionate and not a cynical nerd.

And he was a worker. His work ethic was



fuck the world. This is another thing that is killing me right now. He wrote about almost every single band or record he heard for the past three years, vicious where it needed to be, hysterically funny most of the time, smart and direct one moment, driveling and meandering the next, but he did what a good writer does: he made you read, he made you want to read. Let's not forget that the majority of music writing is very weak, produced by industry types to flavor bland pap; not even powerful industry types, but worms, failed publicists or incapable journalists, fact wielding nerds. Very little of value in 2012 is written about music. One thing Brendon understood was that very little music is worth the value of good writing, and he worked hard to give good to those that worked. After reading *Of Pop and Pies and Fun*, *Funhouse* seemed so much richer: that is the value of good music writing. Brendon got this.

As a consquence, the music magazine (calling it a fanzine seems fucking ridiculous—Brendon wasn't a "fan") in 2009-2012 was consistently represented at its best by the work of Brendon, his many pseudonyms, and the geniuses that he employed to write for him. My scholastic endeavors caused a withdrawal from music writing at the exact point when Brendon was hitting at his hardest. Thinking back over the past couple of years and the hours / days I spent devoted to writing about Brassier's speculative realism or Nietzsche's glorious nihilism, it was primarily the intensity of Brendon's work that was keeping me interested in reading and writing about music and coming back to it, out of the abyss.

Last weekend, Total Control were in Brisbane, and I saw Brendon each day we were there, and we talked shit, and he was articulate and funny and raw and real, the best I've seen him.

"Michael Shannon is the greatest actor alive."

"The *Human Centipede 2* is superior to the original, and one of the best films of the last year."

"I'm starting a new band."

"We need to work on that book with Kritzler."

"Watery Love... Watery Love."

When I got home he asked me if Total Control would do a record with NGL, he sent me an Eminem film clip, and he pressed me to write something for the 2011 special issue of *NGL*. I was loathe to write about music— "mate, you have that covered, you have music writing sorted."

I had a lousy year, but I was trying not to complain, living as we do in a culture saturated in self pity. The last writing I wrote for Brendon is depressing to read right now, as I lacked the temerity to give him something hard, succumbing to the same awful, hollow cynicism that has made me avoid writing for the last year, because writing is a very hard thing to do right, and

if you don't work at it, constantly, you start to write like everybody else, and that is terrifying, that is an experience that very few people could relate to. But Brendon could relate to it, he knew when he was writing sloppy, he knew when he was on autopilot. We could talk about this kinda shit, and finding people in this world who could talk about this kinda shit is difficult.

I intended to edit the piece and give him something more deserving of his work. But today he died. I'm not able to sleep without thinking about this terrible fucking loss, and now it's coming on 5am and I've spent the past few hours trying to write something here that expresses my condolences for those who were close to him, hoping to not drift into some Bangs-on-Laughner sentiment about how fucking wasteful and horrific this whole thing is, but feeling that this entire time...

What I wish I could have given him for *Negative Guest List* is something that communicated this: he was one of the best things about 2011 and the years previous, he was an inspiration, a sensitive, creative and noble character, a hard worker, and a brilliant writer, one of the finest of our time.

But there is no fucking way he would have printed that.

I'm writing this because I wanted to say all that above for the people who may not have known him too well, this was how I knew him, as an individual who grew stronger and more capable every time I saw him or read any of his writing or heard any of his music (and the new Meat Thump recordings are devastating).

To his friends in Brisbane closest to him, please take care of each other, and to his friends all over this planet who knew him as I did first and foremost through his writing, we are going to have to work a lot harder to keep up with him.

R.I.P.

S.C.U.M IS A STATE OF MIND

By James Barron from the New York Times.

If ordinary people were caught doing what Valerie Solanas did, they would probably have their library cards taken away and would be admonished: Don't even think of asking for another book here at the New York Public Library. Ever. But Valerie Solanas — a feminist loner mainly remembered for shooting Andy Warhol — was not an ordinary library patron. She marked up a book's cover and several pages in side. Apparently, no one realized what she was doing and alerted the staff.

Fifteen years or so went by before anyone noticed, and by then, she was dead. And because the book had been hers in the first place — she was listed as the author, after all — her annotations, said Thomas Lannon, the library's assistant curator of manuscripts, were more like copy-editing by a very angry author.

As it happens, Wednesday is the 25th anniversary of Warhol's death after gall bladder surgery at what was then known as New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, 19 years after Ms. Solanas opened fire and wounded him. She was angry because he had lost the manuscript of a play she had written — a play with an unprintable title that she wanted him to consider. The library book was the *S.C.U.M. (Society for Cutting Up Men) Manifesto*. The opening sentence called on women to "overthrow the government, eliminate the money system, institute complete automation and destroy the male sex." It was published in paperback; the library had its copy bound in hardback, to minimize the wear and tear, in mid-1976. Mr. Lannon speculated that Ms. Solanas slipped into the library in 1977, when she apparently returned to New York for the first time in several years. She had served time in prison for the 1968 shooting of Warhol and had been in and out of mental institutions, including one in Florida. At the library, she would have filled out a slip requesting the book. It would have been pulled from the shelf and handed to her, he said.

Ms. Solanas scratched out her name on the cover and wrote "by Maurice Girodias." Mr. Girodias, who had published that version of Ms. Solanas's text, was famous for having published Vladimir Nabokov's "Lolita," which had put him at odds with censors in France. He published Ms. Solanas's 11,000-word text under the imprint of his Olympia Press. "She's creating intellectual capital," Mr. Lannon said, "but it's being taken away from her — I think that's how she saw it." In her anger, Ms. Solanas wrote "flea" beside Mr. Girodias's name inside the book. She also wrote, "Read my version and events in my next book." (She told The Village Voice she had received a $100 million advance for that next book — from "the mob.") On the title page, she wrote "This is not the title." She also wrote that Mr. Girodias's edition was "full of sabotaging typos." On the copyright page, she wrote "LIES! FRAUD!" She also circled "S.C.U.M." and wrote, "Never! Never!" Inside the back cover, she wrote, "Lies! Lies!" Then she signed her name.

Ms. Solanas did some copy-editing on the back cover, too. The published version had white lettering on a red background. "Only three years ago, we used to make fun of Valerie Solanas, agitator, writer and would-be revolutionary — with her wild, insane radical feminism," it said. "Then we were horrified when she shot Andy Warhol in 1968, just to make a point." She crossed out the last five words and wrote, "Lie." "It's a question of authorship," Mr. Lannon said. "She has a problem with the way it's being presented. They call it a manifesto, but to her it's just ideas." He cited a 1977 interview with The Village Voice in which she said SCUM was not an organization. "I thought of it as a state of mind," she said. The following week, in another article in The Voice, she said Mr. Girodias's Olympia Press edition was inaccurate. She said that "words and even extended parts of sentences" had been omitted.

Ms. Solanas died in 1988 at age 52. Mr. Lannon said the library had never looked for the slip she had filled out when she requested the book. "The fact that it's signed by her is enough," he said. The library transferred the little volume to its Manuscripts and Archives Division once it discovered her changes. It reasoned that she had turned it into an artifact. "You go to the Temple of Dendur" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mr. Lannon said, "and you see where 19th-century travelers scratched their initials" on the ancient Egyptian stone. "That's one thing," he said. "This is like an edit."

Georgia Democrats Introduce No Child Left In Ballsack Act

By Walter Jones from the Florida Times-Union

ATLANTA - Democrats in the legislature plan to show their disagreement with an anti-abortion bill by holding a hearing today on their own "anti-vasectomy bill." The press release from the House Democratic Caucus said the goal is to show what they call hypocrisy of a mostly male legislature passing a law on women's reproduction. Tuesday's news release announcing it included an apparent tongue-in-cheek comment. "Thousands of children are deprived of birth in this state every year because of the lack of state regulation over vasectomies," said Rep. Yasmin Neal, D-Riverdale, author of the Democrats' bill. "It is patently unfair that men can avoid unwanted fatherhood by presuming that their judgment over such matters is more valid than the judgment of the General Assembly, while women's ability to decide is constantly up for debate throughout the United States."

Rep. Doug McKillip's proposal, House Bill 954, seeks to outlaw abortions after the stage of development at which the fetus can sense pain. He said current research pegs that point at 20 weeks after conception, seven weeks shorter than the cutoff for abortion on demand set by the 1973 Roe v Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. McKillip, an Athens Republican, was not amused when he was asked about the Democrats' stunt. "I think it's disappointing that they would make light of something as important as protecting life," he said. "It's just not a joking matter, and it's a time for serious issues and serious discussion."

While the Democrats haven't introduced their bill, McKillip's measure is pending in the House Judiciary Committee where it has been the subject of two hearings so far but no vote.

Neal is a member of that committee. Another member is House Democratic Leader Stacey Abrams of Atlanta who is also participating in today's event. "The Republican attack on women's reproductive rights is unconscionable. What is more deplorable is the hypocrisy of HB 954's author," she said. "If we follow his logic, we believe it is the obligation of this General Assembly to assert an equally invasive state interest in the reproductive habits of men and substitute the will of the government over the will of adult men," Abrams said. McKillip described the Democrats' comments as destructive. "The idea that that's the direction they want to take the debate is disappointing," he said.

PUSSY RIOT TAKE THE KREMLIN

Miriam Elder from the Guardian

Eight women stood in a line opposite the Kremlin, neon balaclavas hiding their faces, fists pounding the air in rugged defiance. Before police carted them off, the members of Pussy Riot managed to shout their way through a minute-long punk anthem: "Revolt in Russia – the charisma of protest / Revolt in Russia, Putin's got scared!" Formed days after Vladimir Putin's announcement in September that he intended to return to the presidency, Pussy Riot have become the latest symbol of young Russian discontent. "A lot of us couldn't sleep after this announcement," said "Tyurya", one of the founding members of a punk collective that has grown, since October, to roughly 30 people, including crew. "So we decided, damn it, we need to do something. We always went to protests and things, but it seemed to us we needed to do something more."

The mid-January performance on Red Square, brazen in its choice of location and lyrics, catapulted the all-female punk band into the pantheon of Russia's increasingly creative protest movement. Pussy Riot are sworn to anonymity, hence the colourful balaclavas members use to hide their faces, even when giving interviews. "It shows we can be anybody," says a band member who goes by the name Garadzha, wearing a hot-pink ski mask and matching stockings. They decline to reveal the smallest details, aiming to maintain total secrecy. They will say only that most of the band members met at the small protests held by Russia's once-feebled opposition, from monthly illegal demonstrations calling for the right to assembly to banned gay pride marches. Their average age is 25. They are hardcore feminists. Most studied the humanities in university. They won't detail their day jobs.

What united them in October was the feeling that something had to change in the country and in its culture of protest, which, until tens of thousands took to the streets after contested parliamentary elections in December, had had hardly any effect on the political discourse. "We understood that to achieve change, including in the sphere of women's rights, it's not enough to go to Putin and ask for it," said Garadzha. "This is a rotten, broken system." Her bandmate Tyurya said: "The culture of protest needs to develop. We have one form, but we need many different kinds."

The band began writing songs with lyrics such as: "Egyptian air is good for the lungs / Do Tahrir on Red Square!" and performing on trams and in the metro. Videos of the flash gigs began spreading across the internet. When the protest leader Alexey Navalny was jailed for 15 days after his arrest during Russia's first post-election protest on 5 December, three members of Pussy Riot took to the roof of the jail where he was being held, setting off red flares as they sang "Death to prison / Freedom to protest!"

The fear of arrest long ago left the band members, steeped in the tradition of illegal protest. "We have experience with it, we've been detained at protests before," said Tyurya. "It's not scary – you're surrounded by good, normal people, those who protest against Putin." All eig0ht women were detained during the Kremlin performance, questioned and released. Most got off with administrative fines rather than the 15-day jail sentences often doled out to those who stage illegal protests. "The revolution should be done by women," said Garazhda. "For now, they don't beat or jail us as much."

"There's a deep tradition in Russia of gender and revolution – we've had amazing women revolutionaries." The band is getting ready for its next performance, something that usually takes a month to pull together. Its members don't discuss plans on the telephone or give away details, out of fear that the security services will disrupt the project. Is what they do art or politics? "For us it's one and the same."

They won't be wearing their radical outfits when attending Moscow's next big protest on Saturday, as the opposition hopes to build on the momentum of two major protests in December that brought tens of thousands to the streets of the Russian capital. But like all good punks, the band wants to see the protest movement develop beyond legal boundaries. "Putin and his team are behaving so rudely, and the people aren't ready to react in the same way – they want all these protests to be sanctioned," said Tyurya. "But that's what's needed when you're fighting an illegitimate government. They're basically occupiers, they don't have the right to be here – why should things be agreed with them?" That was a sentiment that began to arise among some of Moscow's protesters in late January, when negotiations between organisers and the mayor's office dragged on as authorities sought – and ultimately failed – to push the demonstration to Moscow's outskirts. Protesters will march on Saturday towards Bolotnaya Square, across from the Kremlin. Tens of thousands are expected, despite a temperature of -20C.

Putin is still widely expected to win the presidential election on 4 March and remains the country's most popular politician, something his critics attribute to the state's monopoly on television and access to politics. Liberal politicians are regularly denied the right to register parties, and the candidacy of Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the liberal Yabloko party, was declared invalid last week. Yet analysts say Putin's ability to govern unchallenged will be severely hampered by the negative reaction to his return. It has not only rocked the Russian elite, but led to a renewal of spirit in Russia's creative classes. Satirical programmes find no place on state-run television but have blossomed on the internet. Moscow theatres are staging overtly anti-regime plays. And Pussy Riot, who cite riot grrrl pioneers Bikini Kill and cult heroes Sonic Youth as inspiration, continue to perform.

"We wanted to create a new form of protest – maybe not such a huge one, but we compensate for that with the bright, provocative and illegal nature of our performances," Tyurya said. Like Russia's tens of thousands of protesters, the band members don't know how the authorities will react next time. "After Red Square, they took us roughly, got even angrier than usual," Tyurya said. "The phrase 'Putin's got scared' – it was a real slap in their faces."

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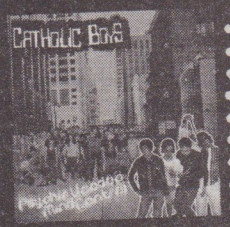

CATHOLIC BOYS - Psychic Voodoo Mind Control LP

Reissue of long out-of-print garage punk classic from early 2000's Green Bay scene. Remastered from original session tapes by Justin Perkins. Features new artwork by Paul Reject. Split release with HS!BF Records. ESSENTIAL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

THE MISTREATERS - Singles, Rare & Unreleased DOUBLE LP

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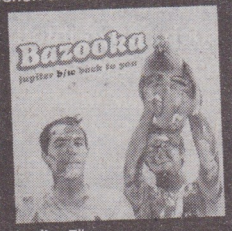

BAZOOKA - Jupiter 7"

Debut single from Huntsville, Alabama's Josh Macero (Thomas Function) and Raidy Hodges (Church Of My Love). 2 pop masterpieces. 100 green / 400 black vinyl.

GUILTY PLEASURES - Summer Strange LP

"A LOST CLASSIC" 12 tracks recorded and mixed in 2000 by Jim Diamond, and unreleased until now. Sleazy and PERFECT garage punk rock & roll, as good as anything from the "glory days" of Crypt, In The Red, Estrus, et al.

COMING SOON: Ramma Lamma 7", Sonic Chicken 4 LP

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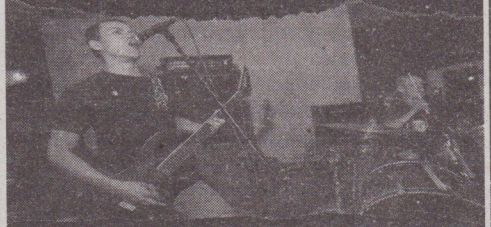

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MRR asks YOU:

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

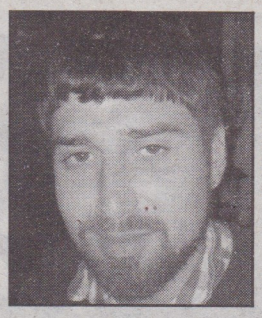
This month's question: what's the most overrated band/record?
(Asked over the Hysterics/Crude Thought Bay Area weekend)

Pat, 36, Berkeley
Side A and side B of *My War*. Also, side A and side B of *The First Four Years*, side A and side B of *Hey! Ho! Let's Go*, side A and side B of *Hamburger*. The crazy thing is that the most overrated question I've been asked is "what's the most overrated record?".

Jon, 25, Berkeley
Nirvana.

Andy, 31, Oakland
The Rolling Stones. They are very widely loved, but they only stumbled upon a good riff once or something.

Kim, 27, Oakland
Lil Wayne. Everyone someone drives by, it's playing, or someone's reciting the lyrics, or some other artist is like "I'm Lil Weezy," because they have to give him credit. Everyone loves Lil Wayne, and they're like "the biggest album of the year!"

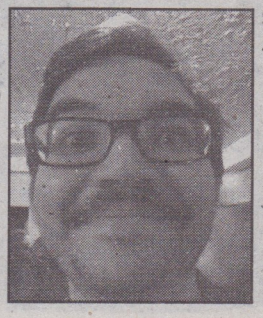


Gentry, 27, Oakland
The band Girls from San Francisco. I just think they're overrated because they just sound like a younger, drunk version of Elvis Costello, and they think they're being really funny and ironic when they don't have any girls in the band, and it's just two white dudes.

Joey, 31, Oakland
I would consider my tastes to be pretty diverse, but there's no way that Leftover Crack should have ever been allowed to make a record.

Kevin, 31, Oakland
Sonic Youth, the Pixies, Leonard Cohen, there's the Misfits who only had one wonderful record in my opinion, and a lot of rubbish. Sonic Youth had two good records: *Goo* and *Dirty*. And people love Tom Waits, and I don't understand what it's about.

John, 30, Oakland
The Pixies. WHATEVER.



Sebastian, 22, Oakland
Joy Division.

Stephie, 22, Olympia
Dark Side of the Moon. The only good Pink Floyd record is the first one: *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*.

HAWAII SCENE REPORT 2012

Report by Corby Plumb and Annie Hollis Photos by Michael Keany

Since there probably hasn't been a 50th state scene report since sometime in the '90s, there's a lot of catching up for folks to do. I'm sure a lot of you are surprised that Hawaii even has a scene happening... Being in the most isolated chain of islands in the world can do that. We sort of have a secret scene and a secret history that even the most encyclopedic punk can tend to look over. Hawaii is an interesting place to be into underground music. Honolulu in particular is sort of a metropolitan small town; there's not really a regional sound per se, or even large, separated scenes. What we have is something small but surprisingly diverse. Fans of punk, hardcore, indie rock, metal, ska, reggae, garage rock, hip hop and experimental music all sort of go to the same shows and support each other's sounds for the most part. A lot of the people, bands and promoters involved are trying to eliminate the cliquish aspects of the past, since this town's too small for us not to share what we've got and all work together. It's just different here, but only in the details, really. We don't get a lot of touring DIY bands (although that is slowly changing), and the sheer economics of touring the mainland makes it hard for most local bands to get off the rock; bands just can't just load up the van and go. Because of this I think a lot of bands just sort of forget about the overall global scene, and stay locally focused. Being this insular can be great for the local scene, but it can also prevent a lot from being added to it. But in the last year or so, there has been a lot of progress and byways into the international DIY network. The 808 scene, like any other, has gone through ups and downs through the years; bands get together, break up, venues open and close, shows go from all ages all the time, to only 21 and over. Right now though, I'm happy to say we're on one of those peaks where the bands, venues and people who are really into the music are trying to create a sustainable DIY scene.

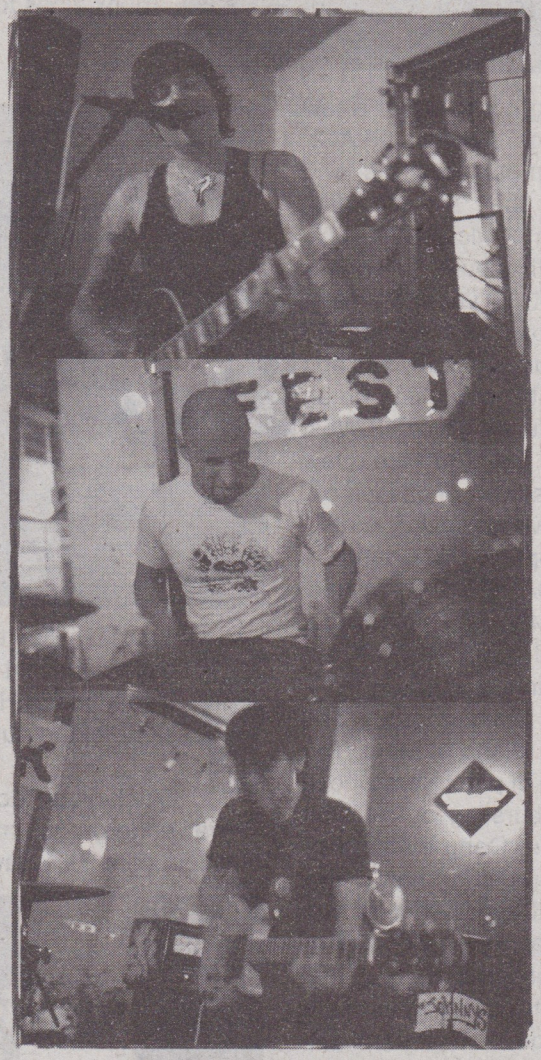
The bands listed are all bands that are making a real impact on the scene in some way, play a lot of shows or who have or will have available recordings out. Also, I tried sticking to the more punk and hardcore factions of the Honolulu scene, and have left out a lot of great groups that exist outside these genres that are playing shows. Most of the bands covered here have Facebook, Bandcamp or other web presences, so it's encouraged that you look them up if you're interested. Apologies to any bands that we may have left out, but there's always the next scene report! Or just write your own! Also any bands touring to or from Japan and Australia: think about making a layover in Hawaii! We'd love to have you play here, so please get in touch if you're interested! We'll find you somewhere to stay, feed you and show you a great time.

BANDS

Pop punk has always been a big part of the Hawaii scene over the years and THE SUBSTITOOTS have been the one band keeping up with that legacy of catchy fast punk music. The 'Toots play in the fast and messy vein of the QUEERS and other Recess Records bands, but their songwriting has gotten a lot stronger since their teen days of singing about pizza. They have a sharp sounding demo kicking around that fans of the genre would definitely find some real worthwhile tunes on, and they are currently in the studio working on an EP. Members of 'Toots also have some great side projects—bass player Will leads the newly formed TV MICROWAVE, who sound to me like a Lookout records band playing a jangle-pop version of the Replacements and guitarist Kevin switches to bass in FALSE CRACK who mix the silly fun of pop punk with the speed and aggression of skate punk in a thing they like to call "FunCore"—expect blazing fast drum work and a singer with a love for posi-jumps. The band has some recordings ready to go for an EP or a split of some sort in the next year, so look out for that.

Garage rock and surf sounds have been making a big splash as of late, and people have been really digging on the sounds of pure rock n' roll. GNARWHAL play full-tilt garage punk boogie with delinquent surfabilly leads and vocals that can go from a bluesy honk to an ear ringing screech. I don't think it'd be wrong to say that they are one of the best bands to emerge from Honolulu in a long time. They released the *Cowbelly* tape last year and more recently they've put out their second demo *Phases* and are currently recording for a seven inch that should be out in the coming year. Gnar guitarist Nick has also formed a great indie pop band with a few friends called the CATCHERS, who are beyond cute and fun to dance to. CORAL STABZ is a guitar/drum two piece playing minimalist surf pop full of reverb and twang with surfy leads. They released the *Stealin' Pakalolo* tape this past October and also have an online EP *Honolulu's Burning* to download at their Bandcamp. Guitarist Travis creates psychedelic Mooged-out music in the DREAM DRAGONS and Alex plays drums in two other great bands: I TRAMONTI who sound like a current take on '90s emo ala MINERAL or CAP'N JAZZ and WITCH BABY which brings to mind DISCOUNT-esque pop-punk, with a nod to singer Ipo's punk past in '90s band SORRY, adding great twisted and complex guitar leads by guitarist Kim.

For those who crave something a bit faster and harder, we have a great and growing hardcore scene. DIE SLOW was around for a few years, and they imported the sounds of late '90s and early 2000s East Coast style hardcore to Hawaii. I've heard them be compared to AMERICAN NIGHTMARE and SUICIDE FILE, with mosh parts that really get those windmills spinning and fists a-flying. Currently they have a few recordings out on their demo CD and there were plans for an LP, but as their singer moved this past September, the band is currently defunct. Following in their footsteps is ILL STANCE who rock hard-edged East Coast hardcore similar to SKARHEAD or MADBALL with a serious head nodding chug-groove. Members of ILL STANCE also play in PHARAOHS who rip seriously screeching hardcore that incorporates the better parts of scream: dissonant, chaotic guitar leads with the calculated attack of CONVERGE. They and ILL STANCE both have pretty recent demo CDs out and both are working on new tunes as always. In their short time together, SIBLINGS has stormed the scene with short fast ragers that have brought the punk back into hardcore for Hawaii. They released *The Book of Siblings* demo in the summer, a split "cassingle" with ILL STANCE earlier in the fall and should have a split seven inch with PHARAOHS out soon. The boys are also fundraising for a west coast tour sometime in the spring, so get in touch with them if you have any info on gigs, venues or bands they should play with.



GNARWHAL

On the more mutated side of hardcore is MAKUA VALLEY BLAST TEST, previously just bass, vocals & a drum machine, but now with added synth and sax noise lent to the complex prog-violence fray. They released a 3" cd-r demo in 2010, and should be releasing another this coming year with possibly an appearance on a compilation later on. Members of MVBT have also started two very different sounding projects. One half are now in HERBIVOROUS MEN, who play off-kilter explosive hardcore in the vein of the TAR BABIES or VOID with a touch of chaotic '90s styles and noise rock. The other half of Makua are in TEMPLE FUGATE, a really joyful sounding instrumental rock band inspired by BRAID, DON CABALLERO along with UK indie, jazz and math rock.

Reggae and ska has always been popular in the islands and so naturally it has a massive influence on the underground. This type of music usually doesn't get

CORAL STABZ

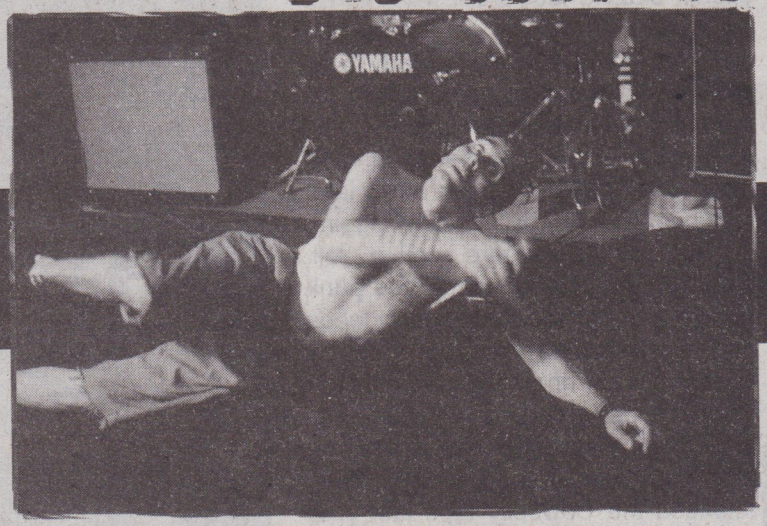
covered in *MRR*, but it'd be wrong not to cover a few of the bands that get the rude kids skankin'. BLACK SQUARE has been around for almost ten years, and over that time they've perfected their mix of bass-and-horn heavy roots reggae with political punk rock. They recently released their fourth album, finished a mainland tour and continue to fill up venues locally. THE BLUE RIBBONS are a more recently formed group with a love for the soulful sounds of early ska and rocksteady. They've been in the studio working on an EP and are currently plotting and funding a 2012 West Coast tour. Rockabilly was a bit of the rage here a few years back, and while that trend has sort of passed on, people still have a taste for backwoods rockin' music. CAMPFIRE plays rootsy country-punk that sounds a bit like LUCERO or even early AGAINST ME at times. They recently recorded an album *Morning Remedy* that is currently available for download via Bandcamp, but they are aiming for an LP release in the near future.

Hawaii is more than just one island though, and punk rock is alive and well on the island of Maui. The Order of the White Rose is a group of punk lifers whose passion for local politics comes bursting out of their straightforward attack. They play in Oahu every once in a while and always put on a rousing show. They have two self released albums out and available. Fun fact: guitarist Steve Hart is a regular contributor to both *MRR* and *Razorcake*. Beyond them, I don't have that much information on the punk scenes of the other outer islands...There were a few bands on the Big Island, but I haven't heard anything from there in a long time and as far as I know the smaller islands like Lanai, Kauai and Molokai have no scenes happening.

ZINES

We've had a lot of great zines sprout up or print new issues in the last year. *So Nails* is a hardcore zine focused on history both in Hawaii and in the global scene with great interviews and a professional-quality layout and printing steez. *Showerbeers* is a punk rock fanzine that mixes personal stories with interviews and writing about punk rock. *Riff Raff* is a perzine focused on what it means to be punk, female, and getting older while remaining punk. *Risen Apes* is a book review zine that focuses on a lot of radical political texts -- take this one to the library with you! *Aloha Friday* is a photozine that gives a great feel of what living in Honolulu is like--from clubs to mountaintops to the beach. *Oh, My Bad* is a graffiti zine focusing on the local scene with surreal and risque humor; *Neeps* is a cute perzine with cute stories, puzzles and games; *Ho Stage* is a zine focused on harm reduction for sex workers and covers current local politics around sex work and *Vested* is a quarter-size perzine from the lead singer of Witch Baby. *Unseen Press* is a small mobile zine distro/library that sets up at events like *Art and Flea*, a monthly indie flea market. Corby from *So Nails* tries his best to bring in as many current international punk zines to have available at shows.

FALSE CRACK



WEB

Hawaiian Express Record/808shows.com – Keeps a usually current calendar of events in the Honolulu area, also home to Hawaiian Express Records, a real cornerstone of the punk community here. www.808shows.com

Stuck on a Rock – A blog documenting the history of Hawaii underground music. www.stuckonarockstuckunderarock.blogspot.com DIY Hawaii Tumblr http://diyhawaii.tumblr.com

CAMPFIRE

DARK TIMES

Dark Times hails from Oslo, Norway, a city fairly stinking from the overflow of music it contains. Much like their song "Worlds Away" describes the overwhelming isolation in a crowd, the trio is surrounded by masses of bands, and yet they stand alone with their unique, angry sound. They meld lo-fi noise with heavy baritone guitar, going everywhere from fast, raw hardcore to ominous, torpid punk from hell. They also specialize in sarcasm. Amidst much dry Norwegian humor and tea, the cheerful members of Dark Times show that they've never gone the traditional route in punk.

Rikke: Drums

Sebastian: Baritone guitar

Ann Kristin: Guitar and vocals

Interview by Trish Bronte

MRR: So how did Dark Times become a band?

Ann Kristin: It started with me and Rikke and Anne, a friend of ours who talked about learning instruments. We thought, hey, wow, we should just start a band. And then we did.

MRR: When was that?

Ann Kristin: That was in February of 2010, two years ago.

Rikke: I remember exactly the point when we decided to do the band, because we were just out one night drinking at a bar.

Ann Kristin: I said that I wanted to learn guitar.

Rikke: And Anne said, "I want to learn how to play the bass," and then I was like, "What?! I want to learn how to play drums!" and that's when we said—

Ann Kristin: "Aah! we have to start a band!"

Rikke: Yeah, it was like one minute of conversation, and that was it.

laughter

MRR: You guys had never played any instruments before?

Rikke: I've played different instruments since I was eight but never drums. I played a little guitar in middle school.

Ann Kristin: I bought an acoustic guitar when I was sixteen, but I never really learned how to play it.

MRR: I think a lot of people could say the same.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, so it was the first time I picked up an electric guitar. At first, we went to this class at *AKKS*...

Rikke: ...*AKKS* stands for *Aktivt Kvinne Kultur Senter* (Active Woman Cultural Center). It's an organization in Norway promoting women in all aspects of the music industry...

Ann Kristin: ...so we started there. First, we learned how to play our instruments, then how to play together, and then we had this gig with *AKKS* in June.

Rikke: That was our first show, kind of.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, we only played covers.

Rikke: And Anne was still with us.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, as the bassist. After that, we started to write songs in the summer of 2010. Then Anne went to San Francisco to study, and that's when Sebastian came on board.

MRR: How did Sebastian seem like a good choice to replace Anne? And why the switch from bass to baritone guitar?

Ann Kristin: We just started thinking, who do we know well who plays bass? We knew two guys, and Sebastian was the one who didn't play in other bands, so we thought that would be the best choice. We asked him, and he said yes.

Rikke: Also, you know, he's a cool dude.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, he's a good guy. We knew there wouldn't be any problems or anything, no issues.

MRR: You're not a trouble maker?

Sebastian: nope.

laughter

Sebastian: Well, I'm the one that trashes the hotel rooms when we play outside of Oslo.

Rikke: Yeah, and then he cleans up afterwards, so...

Sebastian: When I started, I had an old, crappy bass. Then I bought a new bass, but then right after that I figured I actually wanted to play the baritone guitar, just because--

Rikke: --you're so special?

Sebastian: I don't know.

MRR: What's the difference? What do you get out of baritone guitar?

Sebastian: Well, the one I bought can play as low as a bass, but the neck is a bit shorter and the strings are closer, so it's more versatile. Anders Hana played with the same Gretsch baritone guitar when he was in Noxagt, and it made an impression on me.

MRR: What has the process been for your songs, from notes and words in your brains to putting the songs out on tape and 7"?

Sebastian:: First, someone makes the basic structure for a song; we've all made songs. Then, we work on it together. It's a pretty open process.

Rikke: And then our good friend Pål from the bands Okkultokrati and Haust helps us record.

MRR: The song "Distrust" is fantastic but rather different from your other songs. What went into creating that song?

Sebastian: I remember that when Ann Kristin showed us the main riff, she was worried about it being too corny, but we loved it. If I remember correctly, all the other parts just came together naturally but in a more jammy way than our other songs. I do think Ann Kristin came up with most of the riffs though, didn't you?

Ann Kristin: Yeah, I wasn't sure about that song at first, because I thought the main riff was too easy to be any good. I still have doubts about that song, but I like it when it reminds me of Beastie Boys. As for the lyrics, it's mainly about not knowing what to do with your life. And dealing with people you can't really trust, being drawn into things that's bad for your mind. Something like that.

MRR: So collaboration is an important part of Dark Times.

Rikke: Definitely. Plus, we've done all our recordings in our practice space, which is where everybody in the Black Hole Crew practices. For the tape, that was just Pål and

Lars of the Black Hole Crew who offered to put out our first batch of songs through their label Ormyngel. Later on, Terje, who previously worked at the label Norway Rat, started his own label called Sheep Chase records, and he wanted to work with us. That production ended up as our 7", the first release from Sheep Chase.

MRR: You guys are a part of this Black Hole Crew, along with bands like Okkultokrati and Haust. How did it start up? How'd you guys get involved?

S: The name came from Vebjørn, the singer in Haust. He and others in this group had this similar attitude towards life, culture, music, whatever. Vebjørn used the black hole as a metaphor for hopelessness. And the mentality of the black hole crew is all about embracing hopelessness. That's how he coined the phrase, which appears in the song "Skate Rock" by Haust. And I don't know, we became a part of it, because they were friends of ours and they wanted to release our music.

MRR: The Black Hole Crew includes not only musicians but also artists in other fields. Would you call it a collective?

Ann Kristin: It's more of a handful of like-minded friends who dig the same stuff and happen to collaborate on music, because we like each other's music, and we play and rehearse at the same place, so it's convenient.

Sebastian: We've played shows together.

Rikke: We've also had a lot of help from them. They've loaned us equipment and anything else we needed, like helping us with recording and releasing our first tape.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, because they record all their own music, and put the tape releases out on Ormeyngel.

Rikke: For us, it's been very beneficial. I don't know how we contribute, but at least we get a lot out of it.

Ann Kristin: We're a crew, but really we're an anti-crew. The name Black Hole Crew pokes fun at the use of that term "crew" in the hardcore scene, which is usually very positively charged.

MRR: What does the Black Hole Crew offer that you can't find anywhere else in Oslo?

Rikke: It allows for negative space in the punk scene...you can be negative without judgment. Parts of the scene in Oslo focus a lot on the positive, and if you don't really feel so positive all the time, it's nice to have others who feel the same way.

Ann Kristin: We just do our own thing. We don't really feel like we're a part of a scene, so we just do what we do, and yeah, I think all of us, everyone in the Black Hole Crew, has the same mindset.

MRR: Yeah, because you guys genre-hop between different songs, and that's a quality that Haust and Okkultokrati share...they're hard to define in terms of genre.

Ann Kristin: I guess it's just because we all like a huge variety of music genres. We never really talked about what kind of music we were supposed to play. We just made something, then turned our amps up, and that's it.

Sebastian: Vebjørn really hit the nail on the head with the black hole image, since all the bands in the Black Hole Crew are a bit outside both punk and metal. We're in the undefined black hole, as he says.

MRR: Who writes the lyrics most of the time?

Ann Kristin: Me and Rikke write the lyrics. I guess I've written the most of them. At the beginning, we tried to write together, so we wrote one and a half songs together...

Rikke: It worked okay...

Ann Kristin: ...but it was more effective to just write by ourselves.

MRR: Why write in English?

Ann Kristin: It's a natural thing to do. I've never thought about singing in Norwegian.

MRR: Why is that?

Sebastian: I've never heard a good band singing in Norwegian.

laughter

Ann Kristin: Hey, c'mon! But yeah, it's just that English comes more naturally. It feels more natural.

Rikke: Yeah, almost all the music we listen to has lyrics in English, and of course, it might be easier for people who don't speak Norwegian to get into the music if they understand the lyrics. Also, writing in Norwegian feels like a statement. It feels very much like you're trying to make a point.

MRR: So you think of English as a blank canvas, sort of neutral?

Ann Kristin: Yeah, and you can be more obscure when you're writing in English.

Rikke: We do have a lot of English language surrounding us everywhere, so hopefully it's not the worst English ever.

laughter

MRR: It's not. So Sebastian, are you going to stand by your statement?

Sebastian: Which one?

MRR: That no good bands come out of writing lyrics in Norwegian.

Sebastian: No. But in certain genres I think it just sounds awful.

Ann Kristin: What kind of genres?

Sebastian: Punk.

Ann Kristin: Um, hello, what about Svart Framtid?

Rikke: It works for Knuste Ruter.

Sebastian: Meh.

MRR: Speaking of influences, what are the bands and musicians that has influenced the way you drive your band, musically and philosophically?

Ann Kristin: Musically, when I write songs, I don't ever think of any bands I wanna sound like, but I guess it comes unconsciously. I think it's easier to talk about philosophical influences than musical influences.

Rikke: But then again, I don't think we really have any kind of real philosophy. In terms of role models, there's...

Ann Kristin: ...Fugazi, Sonic Youth, bands like that which we all like.

Sebastian: I keep thinking the Melvins, but I don't incorporate that into my songs except in that I like to slow the songs down and play heavier. I like the way Buzzo thinks "drums" when he writes the guitar parts. It makes things more interesting. But that´s something I dream of doing, not something I actually do...yet.

Rikke: I think we would like to have some statements in what we do, and we would never go too far commercially just to sell records. There are plenty of bands who never compromise their principles, Fugazi being one of the most extreme examples. But I think expressing negative feelings is important as well, because they are just as real and they can even be a catalyst for change. We often talk about things that frustrate us, both ideologically and more personally, and a lot of it goes into our songs. Musically, I think we're inspired by noisy, dissonant punk like Flipper, and catchier stuff like Black Flag or Adolescents. And, you know, being a female musician, you can look to bands like Bikini Kill--

Ann Kristin: ...and Mika Miko...

Rikke: --or female musicians in bands, like Kim Gordon, who have just played in a way that either challenge the gender norms or just ignore the gender question in a way that

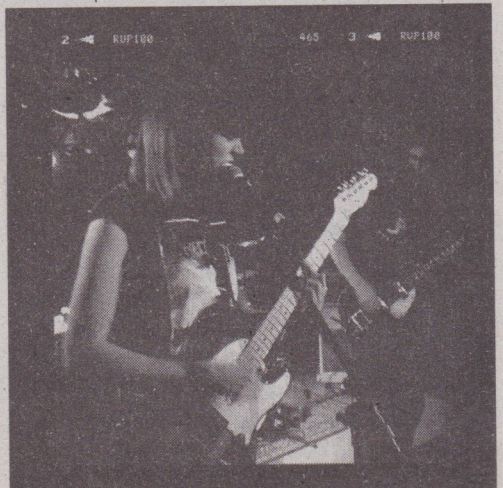


Photo right: Henrik Andersen

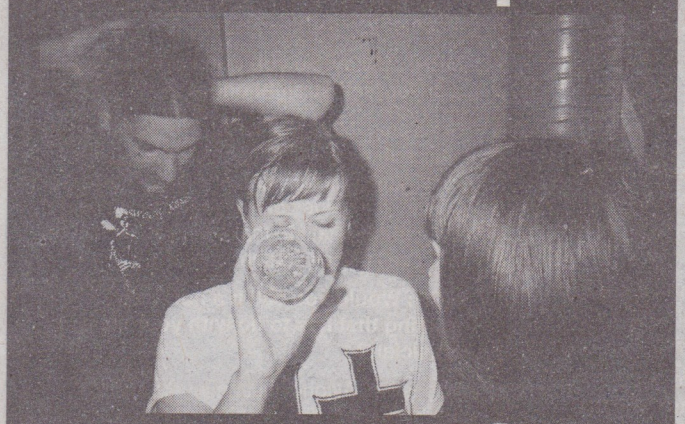


Photo above: Lars Preus

also challenges it. You know, "don't even talk to me about me being a woman playing"...so that's inspiring for me.

Ann Kristin: Some of our songs deal with themes concerning what it's like to be a female musician and the expectations that follow. Like, in terms of how people expect you to act on stage. Additionally, as Rikke says, there's a lot of frustration going on in our lyrics. Lot of existential crisis stuff.

MRR: It seems like a lot of people have been focusing on the fact that you guys are almost all women. They even go so far as to call Dark Times a "2/3 chick band". How do you feel about that?

Ann Kristin: To say that we're a girl-fronted band? I think that's okay, because women in this kind of music that we play are a minority. I think it's good that people emphasize that cool women play cool music, and when there are as many girls as guys playing punk, or whatever, then people don't have to necessarily continue with that emphasis.

Rikke: There's nothing wrong with just stating that there are some women in this band, because it's true. We're not trying to hide it, but we're also not trying to overemphasize it.

Ann Kristin: If people start comparing us to other chick bands or whatever, then it would be...well, it depends on the context.

Rikke: Yeah, you can say it in a completely neutral or positive way, or you can say it in a way that builds weird expectations. We've often talked about the fact that we've had some comparisons where we feel that the only thing they're based on is that they're other women that we're being compared to. That kind of talk, pitting women against each other just because they're women...we'd prefer to not be treated that way.

Ann Kristin: There's enough of that going on as it is.

Rikke: But yeah, it's a fact. We are two women, and one dude. So, you know, hopefully it won't matter that much.

Ann Kristin: But it can matter to other girls. It'd be cool to inspire younger girls to start playing when they see a band with girls playing punk.

Rikke: Recently we were used as an example in a discussion about why women only play soft, cute, romantic music. They were saying stuff like, "I want to hear more women playing rock or punk," but it's like, why do you have to badmouth these other women playing their music in your attempt to find music that you like? It doesn't have to be that way, and I don't think it's cool to say, "but *these* are *cool* girls," you know, "*those* girls suck." There's no need to do it that way.

MRR: Exactly. The idea of being cool just because you're a woman playing in a male-dominated genre is absurd. That insinuates that those genres automatically have more street cred than music by women, which is a fucked up way of thinking. What does the dude think?

Rikke: Yeah, the male...

Sebastian: The one male...

laughter

Ann Kristin: How is it like playing in a band as the one guy?

Sebastian: I don't know--

Rikke: --it's awesome...

Sebastian: Sometimes it's weird, because the press focuses so much on that aspect that has nothing to do with the music, but I mean, I understand, because they started the band, and they write most of the songs. I don't have any issues with that. It's just like being in any other band.

Ann Kristin: Some people write "two girls and a guy."

Sebastian: Yeah, what was it?

R: "Two girls and a male"...

laughter

R: ...which sounds like a sitcom or something. "2-1/2 girls"?

Ann Kristin: "Two girls, a guy, and a pizza place"?

R: "Two girls, a guy, and a baritone guitar"? We should have our own sitcom...

MRR: You talked about not giving up on your ideals in terms of commercial success, but you were invited to play at *by:Larm*, Oslo's music festival geared towards the music industry in Norway. What are your thoughts on taking part in such a corporately driven event?

Ann Kristin: Most bands that I know of in Oslo have played *by:Larm*...

Sebastian: ...including Black Hole Crew bands...

Ann Kristin: ...and I don't see why we shouldn't do it, because it's an okay place to put your music out, and maybe some new people will discover Dark Times, and that's great.

Rikke: The aim of *by:Larm* is supposed to be a way to showcase new music to a new audience, anyway. It should be a chance to make your music known and maybe get gigs around the country, which is really good. Unfortunately, a big part of the festival is also these desperate, kind of big, or really big, names in Norway just hoping once more to be picked up by a British label or something. That part is pointless, making the whole festival bigger and more expensive, so I really don't like that. Or the part where they have this competition for money, especially for the people nominated for the big Statoil grant given out every year.

Ann Kristin: We would never say yes to accepting that grant. They asked every band at *by:Larm* if they wanted to join in on the competition, but we didn't say yes. We would never want to be supported by an oil company.

MRR: So the festival actually started as a way to get good music out to more people.

Rikke: Yeah. If you would like to be a band that tours or sells a few records, then the music industry in Norway is a part of that, and you can maybe participate a lot or not so much. We did get chosen to play at *by:Larm*, and now we can play three gigs there, and maybe someone will buy our 7", book us in other cities, or come to our next show. That's a good thing.

MRR: Norway only has five million citizens. How does that affect how the music industry works within this country?

Ann Kristin: It's a small industry, yeah. I don't really know much about it, but I think it's a situation where everyone knows everyone. I think *by:Larm* makes it easier to get your name out there. But we don't want to get to close to that commercial industry.

Rikke: But there are a lot of bands in Norway, trying to get discovered by some label or the press maybe, and I think that makes a lot of the music very boring and predictable. So the bigger-selling bands in Norway...that's very different from what we're doing. That's not what we're hoping to become a part of, not at all.

Ann Kristin: Just the opposite.

Rikke: Yeah, and international press comes to this festival. If they write about you on their blogs or whatever, someone will maybe order something from us.

MRR: Speaking of the internet: people can get their influences from all over the world now, but do you have any specifically Norwegian influences?

Rikke: Obviously, our Black Hole Crewmates are influences in different ways.

Ann Kristin: Apart from that, I can't really think of any.

Sebastian: Årabrot and Noxagt were kind of the forefathers of the Black Hole Crew, although they aren't a part of it. I know a lot of people in Black Hole Crew, including myself, were inspired by those two bands.

Rikke: There is a lot of good Norwegian music, but it's difficult to say what is inspiring. They're doing such different things from what we're doing.

MRR: It seems like the internet is very important to Norway, since you guys are up here in the Far North, and not every band has the time or money to come up this far. What'd you do before you were flooded with music from the web?

Ann Kristin: It's been a long time since the internet came, but I guess when I was younger, I read newspapers and magazines to get music tips. I wasn't very alternative as a kid, because I'm from a really small town of 1,400 people where no one likes obscure music, so it was hard to figure that out, that alternative music existed.

MRR: Sebastian, you drew the skull on the cover of the Dark Times 7", the album covers and t-shirts for Okkultokrati, and the logo for Sheep Chase Records. What inspiration do you draw from? What artists do you admire?

Sebastian: I stopped making art for a while, but I started up again, because I felt a need to create something. This was before I was in Dark Times. In the beginning, I was very inspired by Justin Bartlett, who is probably most famous for his Sunn O))) covers and a lot of metal stuff. He works with black ink in a very detailed style, which is what you see in all the album covers and t-shirts I draw for. Nature has become a big influence. Trees...

MRR: You've got a lot of those here.

Sebastian: Yes. I like trees.

MRR: Dark Times quote: "I like trees."

Laughter

MRR: Where have you guys toured so far?

Rikke: Just within Norway. Bergen, Tromsø, Oslo. We're going to Trondheim and Bergen again in the spring.

MRR: What's been the best concert so far?

Ann Kristin: Bergen, definitely. We just thought to ourselves, we're in a different city, we don't have to be stressed out about playing right, and nobody knows us here, so let's just get wasted and have fun. And that's what we did. Except for Sebastian, because he doesn't drink.

Sebastian: I don't get wasted.

Rikke: He got high on life.

Sebastian: Yeah. I got high on their drunkenness.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, and Rikke and I just had a few extra pints and went onstage. Also, it was really good because of the crowd.

Rikke: That was the best crowd, I would say, because they were dancing and just having fun.

Ann Kristin: Even before we got on stage, the crowd was ready to burst, and that was really fun. You feed off that energy. The sound was also really good. That's really important for a good show.

Rikke: I think our last show in Oslo was the best...

Sebastian: ...technically speaking...

Ann Kristin: ...when we opened for the Men.

Rikke: A lot of our friends were there, and I felt like it was a really nice vibe. We played as well as we can, not many mistakes.

Ann Kristin: Plus, the fact that we opened for The Men was really cool, and they were into the music, too. That was cool.

Sebastian: I second that.

MRR: So they had fun because they were wasted. What made that Bergen concert good for you, Sebastian?

Sebastian: In Bergen, not knowing anyone there makes it easier. Plus, it was late at night, and everyone but me was drunk. I don't know, when the ladies are relaxed, I'm relaxed.

laughter

Sebastian: That's what i call them: the ladies.

MRR: This isn't a romance novel, Sebastian.

Rikke: "I make sure the ladies are... *relaxed*."

laughter

MRR: ...Okay. So you don't drink...do you call yourself straight edge?

Sebastian: Me not drinking was a personal choice that I made long before I even knew what straight edge was, and it has nothing to do with the values of the hardcore scene. I don't really relate to that scene at all, so no, I don't call myself straight edge.

MRR: Would you call it a non-issue, nothing that has to do with your life as a musician?

Sebastian: Alcohol just never appealed to me. It seemed like people had to change themselves to be able to have a good time, and people getting drunk just disgusted me. I don't get the appeal at all. I guess the straight edge view might relate to that, but I just don't like that whole group mentality thing. I don't have that need to be part of a group to be comfortable with myself as a person, which really seems to be what the straight edge scene is all about. I don't like that, and I'm not really into a lot of straight edge hardcore music either, so it just never made any sense to call myself straight edge.

MRR: Just to play devil's advocate here, one could argue that the Black Hole Crew is a sort of group spreading just another kind of group mentality.

Sebastian: Not really, because with the Black Hole Crew, it's not a group that dictates your life choices. We're all individuals who choose to support each other artistically. Like we said, we're anti-crew.

MRR: Sleep is one of your favorite bands, Justin Bartlett is one of your favorite artists...you're the stoner who doesn't get high. Stone edge.

Sebastian: Ha ha! Now I would probably say Arik Roper is my favorite artist, at least when it comes to cover art, and he did the artwork for the greatest album of all time, *Dopesmoker* by Sleep. He also did the artwork for High On Fire, which is amazing. I would like to do some colorful album covers, but nobody wants that. Maybe the next Dark Times release? I guess I do identify with stoners to some extent. I've never smoked

Photos: near right: Trish Bronte, far right: Lars Preus

weed or done any other drugs for that matter, but in high school I hung out with the stoners. They're great people...and I love stoner humor.

MRR: What would be your dream concert line-up?

Rikke: It would be cool to play with other bands that I like right now, like Shoppers or Punch or Merchandise.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, that'd be cool.

Rikke: It'd be fun to play with bands we're into. But if you're thinking of big names or legendary bands, then it would be getting to play with Thurston Moore like I saw him do once with the band Be Your Own Pet. He just came on stage and started jamming out. I want that.

Ann Kristin: Yeah, and Fugazi.

Rikke: Yeah, we could open for the Fugazi reunion if they asked us.

Sebastian: They read *MRR*, right?

Rikke: Yeah, don't they?

Ann Kristin: Shout out to Ian Mackaye...

Laughter

MRR: Okay. Favorite Norwegian band from the past, the present, and the promising future...

Sebastian: De Lillos are the best Norwegian band of all time. But they're huge, so Yoreyolk might be a better band to mention in this context...lo-fi, indie, whatever. Singer and guitarist André Borgen wrote most of the songs for Yoreyolk, and he is currently Norway's best songwriter. His solo stuff is amazing, too. *Staying Old* was probably my top album of 2008. Noxagt was an amazing band. Årabrot is also incredible. And Okkultokrati.

Rikke: As the promising future?

Sebastian: I guess. There are no new bands in Norway that are good. Maybe Staer?

Rikke: I think there is a lot of good Norwegian punk from the '80s, and I think my favorite is Svart Framtid. I'm trying to check out more old Norwegian punk these days. From the present, I think I'm gonna say Okkultokrati, because I think that they are just really, really good right now. I'm very much looking forward to their next album, and their live shows are incredibly good.

Sebastian: The album cover is gonna be *insane*...

Rikke: I'm really looking forward to the next releases from bands Strike A Match and the Uptights, whenever that's going to be.

Ann Kristin: Yes to Svart Framtid, yes to Okkultokrati, and also Haust and Le Corbeau. Build Nest, Sleep was a great noisy, lo-fi band that Vebjørn from Haust played in. As for the future, I would say White Juice and Problems. They're good, dark hardcore.

MRR: You put out your demo tape through Ormeyngel and Sacred Tapes. Your 7" was put out through the label Sheep Chase. What are your plans for the future?

Ann Kristin: If everything goes as planned, we'll put an album out through Fysisk Format, one of the best labels in Norway. So we're really excited about that, that they want to work with us.

Sebastian: That'll be done by the end of the year, hopefully.

Rikke: We have to write a few more songs, record them, and then they'll put it out, which is great.

MRR: And from there?

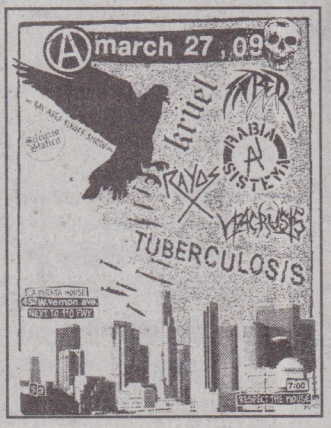
Rikke: We'd love to tour, and we'd love to play outside of Norway. Book us.

Ann Kristin: I second that. More gigs would be great. I guess my dream is to go to the US and play.

Website: darktimes.bandcamp.com

Photo below: Marius Eriksen

krüel



Interview by Amelia Anok

Photos by Pina, Old HC Dude, and Mickey

Krüel are one of the many sick bands that have morphed out of the LA raw ponx petri dish. From a Disclose cover or two to having a few cassette releases as well as their vinyl split with Unlearn, it's time this raw punk staple graced the inside of MRR.

MRR: Are you LA raw ponx?
Hector: Yes I am [laughter].
Kaos: The rawest!
Frank: If you mean we're raw ponx from LA, then yeah I guess I am.
Koopa: Yes, I is as well.

MRR: What does this mean to you?
Krüel: Were just ponx from LA!! OUGH! AAAARRGGGGHHHHH!!!!!!!

MRR: Where do you guys hang out?
Krüel: Well we all live in separate parts of LA so we're mostly all over the city skating, drinking or go to shows together.

MRR: How did you meet?
Hector: Well me and Koopa are family so there isn't much adventure there…[laughter]. I first met Frank at my house, which was the old Krüel HQ. He came down with Tony from Rayos X to record the first Krüel demo CD-R. I first met Kaos at the Lynwood House [Silenzio Statico]. He was jamming out there, which was perfect cause at the time we were looking for a guitar player.
Kaos: I had seen them around LA and hung out with them at the Silenzio house. Me and Koopa jammed out then and they asked if I wanted to join the band.
Frank: I met Koopa and Hector when I went with Tony from Generacion Suicida to record their demo. I didn't get to know them until I had to bum a ride from them to go to The Bay, which didn't happen because we ran into car problems. Kaos and I met after I heard him jamming out with Koopa and that's the end of that chapter!
Koopa: ...well I guess you know how everyone met each other now [laughter]!

MRR: What bands do you play with a lot in LA?
Krüel: the Helpless, Mundo Muerto, Mania, Generacion Suicida, Rayos X, Saber M, Aspex, Poliskitzo, la Voz….

MRR: Have you played any really sick shows with out of town bands?
Krüel: Geister, Fodder, Deras Krig, D-Clone, Crow, Nomad, Mauser, Raw Power, Nerveskade, Fuckheads, Germ Attak, Deskonocidos, Hellwoman, Criaturas, Rat Face, Verraterisch, Kontatto, Free Radicalz, Bellicose Minds, Hjertestop, Detonize, Desperate Hours, Teargas, and our Canadian dawgzz from the north Unlearn!!

MRR: How did your split with Unlearn come about?
Krüel: After we toured with them.

MRR: West Coast tour?
Krüel: It happened in November 2010. The process of tour was stressful at many points and hectic from the minute that we left and came back, but it was amazing! We made a lot of new friends saw the scene outside of LA saw some awesome bands, drank a lot beer and cider! And we learned to not give Unlearn 4Lokos [laughter]!

MRR: Are you going on an East Coast tour soon?
Krüel: Were planning on hopefully going to the east coast in mid 2012, if all goes well.

MRR: Do you mostly use Facebook to get in touch with people to set up shows in other towns? Or do you know people in other cities just from tape/zine trades, fests, and them coming through your town on tour, etc? How has the internet affected your band and your ability to get the damaging noise of Krüel out to the masses?
Krüel: We never used Facebook to set up shows out of town. It was mostly done through emails and phone calls. We made most of our contacts from the touring bands we've met and played with here in LA. The internet has made it easier to get our music out there for people who haven't heard us before or are from other countries.

MRR: What bands from LA should we look out for?
Krüel: Mania, Aspex, Atrako and Snarf!.

MRR: Are you making any LA punk compilation tapes again? How's Fukkr SS? Generacion Suicida? Who is in Aspex?
Koopa: Yes, hopefully in the near future more compilation tapes will be made! Fukkr SS is on a really long hiatus and Generacion Suicida is still active and playing shows. Hopefully we will have some vinyl out in 2012. Aspex is me, Frank, and Jon from the Helpless.

MRR: What other bands are you guys in?
Hector: Fukkr SS and I'm currently working on a side project with no name yet….
Kaos: Bass in Rayos X and guitar in Atrako.
Frank: I am currently in Fukkr SS and Aspex.
Koopa: I play guitar and do vocals for Fukkr SS, guitar in Generacion Suicida, drums in Aspex, and bass for the Helpless.

MRR: What current bands who are not from North America, Japan, and Australia are you guys currently infatuated with?
Krüel: Destino Final, Glam, Warning//Warning, Contort, Burial, Heratys, Atentado, Crimen De Estado, Gobierno Militar, Fy Fan!, Gas Mask Terror, Silla Electrica, State Poison, Sudor, Totalickers to name a few!

MRR: Do you mostly listen to old or new punk?
Krüel: Both. There are a lot of good new bands, but you can't go wrong with the classics!

MRR: What was your first record ever? Show?
Hector: Ramones *Rocket To Russia*. My first show was when I was in eighth Grade. It was a backyard gig to see the local bands.
Kaos: Youth Rebellion? First show was a backyard gig to see Threatening Verse.
Frank: Code 13 *A Part Of America Died Today* EP. My first show was a local show. I went to see a local band called Brosky's Revolt at some house down the street where I used to live
Koopa: Discocks / Tom And Boot Boys split EP. First show was a backyard to go see locals the Vomits.

MRR: Do you think this set a foundation for the music you play now?
Krüel: No because we all listen to a variety of different bands and music.

MRR: What are your future plans for KRÜEL?
Krüel: We're in the process of releasing a tape called *Noise Not Music*, our first self titled 7" and hopefully East Coast tour in 2012, and maybe a mini West Coast tour before that…

MRR: How can the readers of this get in touch with you?
Krüel: Sorry we don't want any of the readers touching us [laughter]! But if they want to contact us our email is dbeatrawponx@yahoo.com

MRR: When was the last time you interviewed a band and submitted it to MRR?
Krüel: Never. We're not really good at interviews as you can tell [laughter]! Shout outs to all the homies and bands we've met/played with throughout the years!

http://xkruelx.blogspot.com/

SIX TWO FIVE

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interview by Alex Turner
as is the photo on this page

MRR: Who are you, what do you play and who do you like more, Rancid or Green Day?

Greg: My name's Greg, I play drums and I'm not answering that question.

Barker: My name is Barker, I play guitar and sing a little bit, and although that question is stupid, I think Green Day is better.

Kyle: I'm Kyle. I sing and play guitar... Green Day.

Bryan: My name's Brian, I play bass. I've never heard either band.

MRR: That's obviously a lie.

Bryan. Ok, Rancid.

MRR: Is there a more interesting story to the name Neon Piss, or are you all just freaky-ass health nuts who love vitamins? (As Greg eats quinoa and broccoli out of a Mason jar.)

Barker: I just thought the name Neon Peace was a good band name and then we turned it into Neon Piss. Is that good enough?

Greg: I'm eating a healthy meal of quinoa, tofu, broccoli and some other assorted greens. It's all organic. I am sitting in a back yard in California. Wait...do you want me to say something more about our name?

MRR: No.

Kyle: Yeah, no comment.

Barker: I don't really like the band name. And I wanted to change it to Neon Peace, I wanted to say that.

Bryan: This is going good, guys.

MRR: On the internet you call yourselves a Southern rock band. And all of you are from the Southeastern US. But clearly you all live in the Bay Area. Do you think your identities as Southerners play a role on the band?

Kyle: Is it really so clear that we all actually live here?

MRR: To me, yes. I've been to all of your houses in the Bay.

Kyle: Yeah, I think we're a Southern rock band. Oh, no, that's not the question. I can only speak for myself in that I identify as someone who's not from here, who lives here, and often in introducing our band or in saying who we are I try to make it very clear when we're out of town that we're from California but not "from California." I don't know, I believe strongly in a sense of place and having an identity that's connected to the place that made you who you are. Especially since the South and California are two places that often get ridiculed in a cultural way, so why not do what we can to make them onto one freaky quinoa tofu blend?

Greg: Deep fried.

Barker: Yeah, I'd say, I mean there's small towns everywhere, but I come from a small town in the South and I don't know if I would be as angry as I am now if I grew up elsewhere. That really impacted my life, and probably turned me onto punk pretty early. I think being from nowhere also gave me plenty of time to play music and get decent at my instrument. I'm proud, I mean, I'm happy I'm from there. I'm happy that I'm from a place that I hated.

Kyle: It's like that Kris Kristofferson song, "Just The Other Side of Nowhere." It's basically talking about how he moved to this big city that he really hated full of snow and ice and loneliness. "Tell 'em that the pride of just the other side of nowhere's going home." So that's the course that we're charting. Having the band break down in some place that's an amalgam of all the places that we grew up in - Flomaton.
Greg: Flomaton, Alabama. I think it's a huge part of who I am, being from the South. It's a part of my identity. I'm proud of it, but not in that fucked up weird Southern pride kind of way.
Kyle: Also the literature of the South is important.
Bryan: You talking about Faulkner?
Kyle: Who's that? I'm talking about like, James Lee Burke, the crime fiction author. The literature of the South has been really influential on me, not just as a Southerner, but as a musician and someone who likes to put thought into their lyrics. It speaks to me in a lot of ways, especially how it's capable of evoking a really complicated and intense history and being critical of that history while at the same time celebrating it in this dark way.
Bryan: Also everywhere is south of somewhere
MRR: A really long time ago I read an interview with From Ashes Rise, I think in *MRR*, where they were like, "We're from fucking Nashville and it's hard to be a punk here and I always want to live in the South 'cos it makes being a punk real, and there's something real to fight against." And then they moved to Portland and now they do interviews for like Scion, AP, and a whole bunch of bullshit. I guess the question is, do you feel like moving to California from the South to live the easy life of a punk or the easy life in general is questionable or something? Do you feel judged from people who still live in the South?
Kyle: You should see Greg's insert in the Allergic to Bullshit 7".
Greg: That was ten years ago.
MRR: So is the From Ashes Rise interview.
Greg: I don't think that moving to California makes anything any easier. If you live here you don't have to deal with the oppressive summer heat of the south, but you still have to work a stupid job, there are still assholes, and weird backwards attitudes. It's just different, a different climate. I mean, it is easier to walk down the street looking like a freak and nobody fucks with you. Actually, that's not true at all anymore, but, it's not really that different. But it is.
Kyle: The diaspora of Southern punks is huge. I mean, people that grew up in the South that we know from the South are everywhere, which I feel like is one of the things we can credit to having been able to play out of town a bunch. Oakland specifically reminds me of the South in a lot of ways. From the architecture—
Greg: Really?
Kyle: Yeah. From the architecture to the atmosphere and the relationships that people have with each other.
Barker: Yeah, people are really nice here.
Bryan: I think there is an intense migration from the South to here.
Kyle: I still feel like once an outsider, always an outsider. You don't just lose that because you move somewhere. I mean, Morrissey moved to LA, and he's still such an outsider. I mean, he faxes people. He won't even talk to anybody on the phone.
MRR: Are you equating Morrissey and From Ashes Rise in some confusing way?
Kyle: Yes.
MRR: So, why did you move here? Where do you live in the Bay? How does it feel to be yet another punk living in the Bay, and being part of the gentrification, i.e. destruction of the neighborhoods that you live in? And how does being in a band add or subtract to the realities of those situations?
Greg: That's a lot to think about.
Barker: One at a time
Bryan: I'm going to try my best on all of that. I live in Oakland. We practice in a practice space in Oakland that's intentionally used for that and the shows we play generally aren't that controversial with our neighbors, though we haven't played very many house shows in Oakland. I think as far as a band's role in gentrification, I'm not really interested in talking about that 'cos I don't think that's real, but I would say that my own presence is a very complicated thing because I came out here to not work in a restaurant. I came out to not work for eight dollars an hour and work harder than I do out here for fourteen dollars an hour. It's interesting to think about - where do you go? I can't afford San Francisco, so I moved into Oakland but not begrudgingly. I'm here because I'm interested in interacting with Oakland; I'm not here just because I can't afford San Francisco. In fact, given the opportunity, I would stay in Oakland. I have a good rapport with my neighbors. I know my neighbors names, we talk. Just

a couple days ago I borrowed tools from my neighbor. You know, they told us they wished we could stay after our eviction, I think gentrification has a lot to do with your attitude. It's complicated too because it seems like there's such an infrastructure to change the face of the neighborhood anyway. There are so many plans...There's things like condos and such that that start at a higher level. So it almost seems like a chicken and egg kind of debate. Does the city want to be gentrified? Are we fulfilling their roles? Are we initiating it?

MRR: Talk about the BART station and the Post Office like you did last time.

Bryan: The city went and leveled fucking 7th Street, which was a pretty hopping part of town for black businesses. They leveled a serious amount of that real estate to build a Post Office and the BART station, and it took something like fourteen years to finish those things. It seemed like they just leveled it to destroy a bustling black economy. So, that seems way out of our hands. I don't like to

Bryan: I do want to say that I do think that a band can have an impact on gentrification. Bands are playing house shows all the time, being insanely loud. I don't want to say that I don't disregard that.

Kyle: The band's role in gentrification is inspiring shitty neighbors who moved into a house to renovate it and flip it to call the police and get people who are actually beneficial and active in their communities kicked out of their homes. That's what bands do. They give assholes an excuse to be assholes.

Bryan: And maybe attract a hip scene that attracts a lot of people, I don't know. But I don't think Neon Piss is attracting people to Oakland.

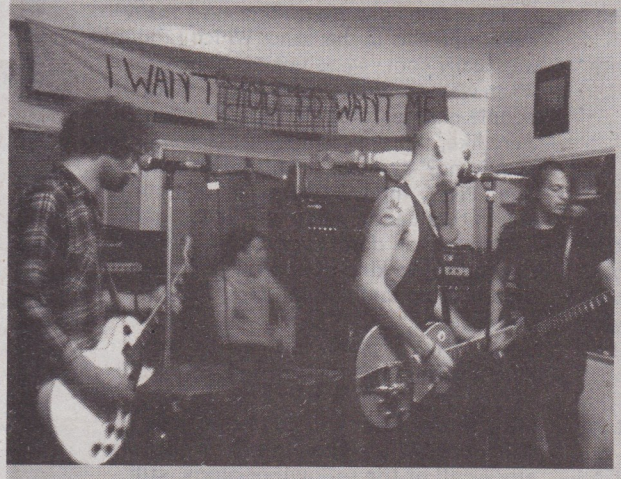
Greg: No.

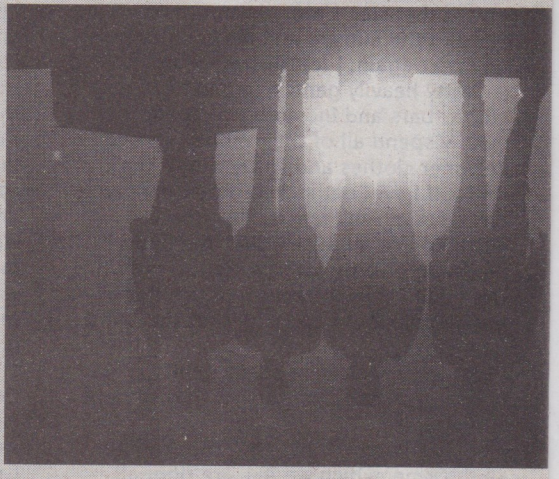
Barker: Everybody on the East Coast has this negative attitude - while I respect that for what it is - but I always felt like California brings out a more positive person. I'm not an asshole, I didn't really belong there, I never really felt at home there. Not that

I think it works in a very different way. It seems like the gentrification that I've seen in West Oakland largely is urged on by people who go to Burning Man. So I point the finger at them.

Barker: Yeah, they've got all this money to build these giant things that aren't safe. Knock it off.

Bryan: I also think that saying "who is the first wave of gentrification?" is risky because towns' faces have been changing long before punks, and I don't think it's often that punks are the first wave of gentrification. I think that in Oakland the first wave of gentrification came from people leaving San Francisco. The fact that San Francisco is so expensive is pushing people to Oakland who want to live like they were trying to live in San Francisco, but in Oakland by building condos right by the freeways. I don't think punks have that much influence and I think it's dangerous to invest so much power in them to thinking that they can change neighborhoods in





instill too much power in some fucking tight pants person with a haircut for changing the face of a neighborhood. I will say that you have to be respectful of your neighborhood, you do have to be conscious of what you're doing, you do have to look around and try to be as appropriate as possible, but I don't know, it's too loaded to answer that. I think that the powers that be have more of an influence on the changing of neighborhoods and the landscaping of that than some scruffy privileged kids who decide not to work very much. That's a very long answer.

Kyle: I agree almost point-for-point with Bryan. Supposedly, as punks, we're about living our lives with some kind of intent and it's fantastic if you choose to recognize that developers, landlords, corporations, and city governments don't care about the people who live in those cities and will do anything to turn a buck off of them. If you choose to ignore those facts, that's where the problem lies. You know, to assume that gentrification is this monolithic process that goes on and that we just get swept up in it, like we're pawns in a game, that's a cop out. I like living in Oakland. I work in San Francisco. I'm very happy to be here. I feel comfortable here. There are a lot of things about living here that inspire darker feelings, but that's personal and has nothing to do with the city. I really feel at home here. But it's a little bit warmer, like as far as the people who live here. Everybody seems to be happier here. There's a lot of dark shit going on, but I don't feel like I'm destroying the neighborhood or anything like that. What do you mean by the destruction of the neighborhood? What was the question, exactly?

MRR: Just that punks are often the first wave of gentrification, the first people to move into a neighborhood that's slowly taken apart and destroyed by the increasing rents and the artists and the hipsters and whoever that follows, and the condos and the raised rents and property taxes and people losing their homes.

Bryan: That's if there is a first wave of gentrification.

Barker: I don't have any money to speak of, certainly. I don't have zero dollars to my name, but I don't feel like I'm bringing a bunch of money into a place that doesn't have any. I can see how people with money would follow.

Kyle: The Bay seems really different because there's been like a very active and open counter-cultural scene going on for decades and decades that really had roots all over the city. Gentrification is going on here, but such a big town like Oakland with such a complicated history and so much racist environmentalism and racist agendas that... .I don't know. I blame the man.

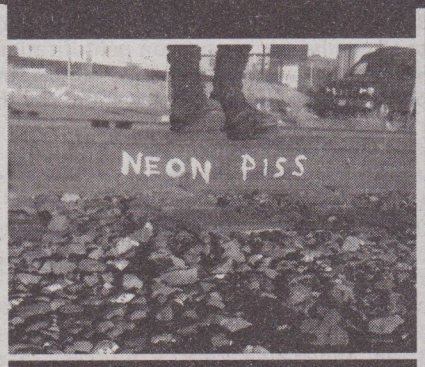
Barker: Some really shitty thing could happen on my block...for instance, somebody ran over my fence, completely. It was non-violent crime, but certainly it was against the law to destroy our property. The cops never came after everyone in the neighborhood called them, over and over again. They never came, but you go over to Emeryville and they'll stop somebody walking over by Pixar just because they looked suspicious or something like that, you know?

Kyle: It also plays into the whole thing where the community at large—meaning people who don't know what they're talking about—are often asking communities like the community in West Oakland to police itself. They're saying "You're responsible for policing yourself because you live in a high crime area and you should make better examples."

MRR: Might work better than the cops we have now.

Kyle: But it seems like the real policing that needs to be done is over the people who would deny someone else agency yet who need a person with a gun and a badge to tell

photo Matto



them how to live
Greg: I don't live in Oakland. I live in San Francisco in the Mission District, which is already heavily gentrified and way different than it was many years ago. And I can't really afford to live there either, but I have rent control. If I ever lose that, if I get evicted, I can't afford to live anywhere else in that city. Unless I want to move far out into the Sunset, and never see anyone else ever again. I feel like the area I'm in is pretty heavily gentrified and filled with crappy bars and incredibly hip people who readily spend all of their money on bars, designer clothes and shitty drugs. It's weird. If I ever get kicked out of my place, I can't live in San Francisco anymore.

MRR: You're all aware that the band is made up of only straight white men. How does this collection of privilege play itself out in the way that the band operates?

Greg: Who says we're all straight?
Bryan: Everybody thinks that they're right all the time.
Kyle: Everybody thinks that they're right all the time, which we ALL are right all the time. I actually feel like it makes us be a lot more conscious of the decisions that we make. I think that artistically and logistically, we've had to have a lot of conversations about the way we do things and how those things come across, because we are aware of the privilege and we're trying to not let privilege drive us. We're trying to make the awareness drive us as a band, if that makes sense.
Barker: We've definitely talked about this tons of times. We're aware of that privilege and—
Kyle: That was a conversation we had at like our first band practice.
Barker: Yeah it's like, well, here's four guys in another band again. Four white guys just playing Southern rock together.
Greg: I consciously made a decision for like ten years to only play in bands that had women in them. And then at some point I just stopped and this is the first band I've played in that's just all men...except for Shotwell, which doesn't count.
Kyle: Jimmy Shotwell is not a band, Jimmy is a myth.
Greg: Jimmy is a legend. He's not just a man.
Barker: Legend has no gender
Greg: Yes, legend knows no gender.
Bryan: I'm in another band where I'm the only guy in the band. I've been on tour with them and Neon Piss and I've definitely noticed that the way that people come up and talk to me is a lot different in Neon Piss than in the other band. People are a lot quicker to throw down with me and say weird shit to me all the time with Neon Piss. I feel like most people who'd come up to me and say a bunch of crazy fucked up shit when I'm with Neon Piss don't come up to me and say that when I'm with Homeowners.
Kyle: While on a tour of the East Coast we played a game with a certain word in the English language that is often used to describe a person with cognitive impairments. We tried to see if, first of all, we could hear someone say that word to a member of the band every day. That goal was easily met. Then, we would see how many times it was said and who was saying it. People definitely came up to us and said stupid shit.
Greg: Like all the time.
Barker: Even people we wouldn't expect to say those things.
Greg: Our band was treated like the YMCA locker room.
Kyle: A bunch of naked men walking around. Mostly older. Sitting in the Jacuzzi, talking about politics.
Barker: Smoking cigars.
Kyle: I think it is important to note that while punk is clearly and visibly dominated by men in a lot of places, we happen to live in a place where we will often be the only all-male band...and that's awesome. That means that folks are aware of the necessity of representing everyone involved in punk and bands are getting booked that aren't all men...that aren't all white and straight. We feel very lucky to be part of a community that is legitimately very open to people of all kinds of presentation. Personally, I'm so sick of always seeing just men playing music and women standing in the back of the room.
Greg: Being bored out of their minds.
Bryan: I think this band has been really lucky and I don't know how privilege fits into it because I feel like after our fourth show, our demo tape was going to be released in Germany, but no one knew who we were. We didn't have pictures of our band anywhere, so I don't know. I don't know if we have the privilege from being from the Bay? We definitely have the male privilege and the white privilege as well. This band has been just lucky in general anyway. But I don't know, that was a stupid thing to say.
Kyle: No, it's real.
Greg: I feel totally lucky.
Kyle: I don't believe in luck, but I do believe in privilege....That's not true, at all.
Barker: Our demo came out and no one had really seen us play so no one even really knew who was in the band. Which I thought was really cool. I was talking to people when we were lining up our tour. A lot of people had heard of our band. My friends were like, "You're coming to town, what are you doing?" and I was like "I'm on tour with Neon Piss." And they were like, "Oh, are you in that band?" And I was like, "That's awesome, you don't even know who's in the band." We kind of had this faceless organization thing going on which was pretty cool...
Greg: YMCA of punk.
Kyle: YMCA men's locker room.

MRR: Being a punk in 2011 is a little confusing. Will you weigh in on some or any or all of the following: blogs, still making CDs, Kickstarter pages for buying vans and tours and albums, cell phones and smartphones—

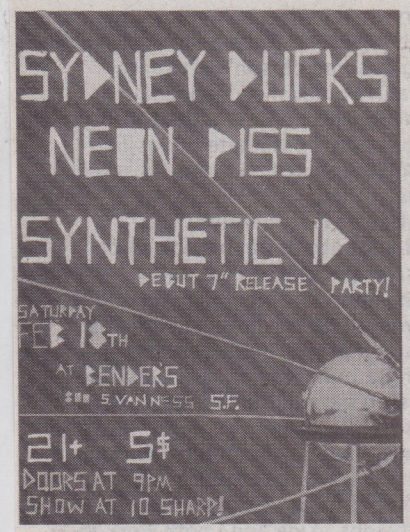
Greg::One at a time!

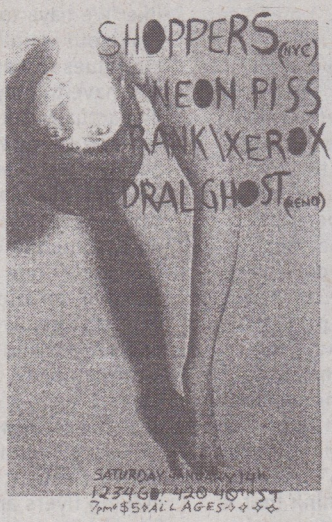
MRR: You can pick and choose. Social networking as like replacing flyering in a lot of towns, things like just how the internet and technology is affecting punk culture and punks' willingness or refusal to interact with those new technologies.

Kyle: I think as the non-social networking member of the band, I initially was very anti-that, in terms of our band. We don't have a Facebook. We have a website that we post shows on.
Bryan: It's a blog.
Kyle: It's a blog. I think that it's very helpful, because you can't really work against the tide of the masses. Having a lot channels to get information about your band out there is really positive, but I do think that things like Kickstarter are turning bands and their music more into commodities. The entire idea behind Kickstarter is that they approve your project and then you have to solicit donations from people within your social networking profiles. Then, you more or less tell them "ok, if you donate this much money, I'll give you this. If you donate like, ten dollars, you'll get a copy of the record. If you donate a hundred dollars, I'll sing

your name in one of the songs." I mean, that's clearly a joke -
Greg: It's not that far from a joke at all, really.
Kyle: Comic book artists and writers and graphic novelists use Kickstarter to make comics and I've seen it happen that one of the things that they'll give someone for a contribution is drawing that person's likeness into the comic. I get that, that's participation in the making of something. At the end of the day, I feel like, that's just like so much more commodification. It also smacks of charity in this weird way that I don't like. I think that it's important to have community support but anonymous donations seem weird. I'd much rather have somebody send us five bucks in the mail for a tape than somebody I don't know to stumble upon my project and think that it warrants a tax-deductible donation.
Barker: I think Kickstarter is not really a classy way to go about it at all. I'm not going to knock someone for trying that, because, I mean, if it's handed to you, it's not that big of a cop out, but that's just not something I would ever do.
Bryan: I feel like I hear a lot of justifications through—and I use a lot of these things—Facebook and blogs and things like that as a way to get out exposure. But I never knew that exposure was an angle for DIY punk, necessarily. I didn't think that the goal was to get it as big as possible and to reach as many people as possible. I thought it was this thing that you were doing, that you're trying to keep it real to a set of ethics or however you want to describe that. I feel like the goal of getting as much distribution or as much attention as possible automatically makes you kind of not really a DIY punk band, and that's fine. I'm not judging somebody for doing that, but I'm not interested in that argument in context to punk or DIY punk. I feel like if you're having a Kickstarter for your van or your tour or whatever, then, you're not a DIY punk band. That's fine, that's what you do. I always thought that the DIY punk thing was something that you did for yourself, you know? I thought that's what DIY stood for. When we play BART shows - where we have these illegal generator shows at BART stops - you're playing and you see all these folks who hang out at the BART stops, all these punks who are dancing and going to interact with you, and then you see 500 squares with iPads and iPhones just filming you right in your face. Or whenever you go into a demo...I was at a demonstration yesterday against BART murders, and everybody on the street is filming you. And that instant need to document everything is really frustrating and alienating to me. Blogs are alright because you don't have to necessarily go through a huge nasty thing like MySpace which is owned by Fox News, or by Rupert Murdoch, rather. So, it's cool to not have to deal with them, to have an internet thing where people can download our songs for free.
Kyle: It's a vicious circle 'cos as there are more ways to promote yourself, there are more bands. That feeds the bands who were toiling in the underground, they're like "We have to get a show, we have to make our visibility larger." And then as that continues to happen it's this cycle where you have to play this disgusting game to like actually get a show. I would much rather exposure be on our own terms, and not need to overly promote. I mean, shit, we did play this giant show courtesy of 1-2-3-4 Go! Records that, I mean, that's exposure and promotion on our own terms but I feel like its one thing to play something like that, an anniversary festival for a local record store owned by a friend of ours, and another playing a festival that's operated by a car company.
Barker: Yeah, it's not sponsored by Scion or Pabst or something. That was one guy sinking his money into one big thing. As for the flyers, it sucks that people aren't making flyers anymore. I was talking to my friend in New York - it's a huge city with tons of punk shows and he has a bookstore where you can drop off flyers and he's like, "No one ever drops off flyers anymore. They're just disappearing." It sucks. I like flyers so much and they're disappearing.
Bryan: I always make flyers for shows I book.
Greg: That's one of the things I don't like about social networking - everyone just wants to put the show on the internet and that's just how you find out about it. In that situation, you can't just walk down the street, see a flyer on a telephone pole and know that a show is going on. That makes it harder to get people outside of your social circle to come see a band, or other punks that you don't associate with might not know about this awesome band that's coming to town. Also, I don't have a cell phone and I feel like sometimes I miss out on a lot of things because people can't text me.

One positive thing that I can say about social networking is that I find it easier to book tours now. I'm probably the only person in this band who ever used a tone dialer to book tours, which is a little box that you can put up to a pay phone...this little box that you have to install this crystal into: it sounds totally mystical. You put it up to a pay phone, and somehow it tricked the thing into thinking you put quarters into it so you can call long distance on it for free. I booked tours in the mid-90's with a tone dialer on a pay phone and you had to get people to call you back at a pay phone at a certain time so you can be there, and it was a total, complete pain in the ass. So I like booking tours on the internet. I think it's a lot easier, because, as I said earlier, I don't have a cell phone and tone dialers don't work anymore and there are no pay phones anywhere. So that's one good thing I can say about it. I also think Kickstarter is a total cop out and really weird. On the one hand, if people want to give you money, then, whatever. But I think as punks, we can do better.
Kyle: Social networking is good for greasing the wheels of booking shows and tours, but I think that, we should make punk more visible. I mean, I know that sounds ridiculous to people who are visibly are punks, but why aren't there more flyers everywhere? Why can't you visibly distinguish between what's a hip show happening at some person's art space or what's a DIY punk show happening at somebody's hip art space? Is there such a thing as 'too easy'? But I hate things that are easy and I prefer to be utterly miserable all the time.
MRR: Maybe the last real question. We talked a lot about paying for shit ourselves. Or you paying for shit yourselves, and working shitty jobs and, what do you all do for money, and why do you have that job, and how does it make being a punk easier, and how does it make being a punk harder, other than working sucks?
Greg: I don't think any of us actually really have what you would call a shitty job, which is kind of funny, since we talked about shitty jobs. Kyle and I both work at a dual-diagnosis recovery program, which means working with people with substance abuse problems and some form of mental disability, and I really enjoy it. I don't think it's a shitty job. The pay could be better, but I'm not going to complain about it. I have a lot of leniency in my hours and how much time I can take off work, so it gives me a lot of freedom to go on tour and to do band-related things. That's my job. I enjoy it.
Kyle: I enjoy our job because we're not making money for anyone, per se. I mean, like, clearly somebody's making money.
Greg: Somebody's making money somewhere.
Kyle: We're serving the community in a really important way. Where I'm from and really where we're all from, mental illness is taboo, is not talked about, and is swept under the rug. That makes things infinitely more difficult when people actually have issues with their mental health. Thankfully, we happen to live in a place that views mental health as a community issue. So, I like working that job because it involves me in the community in a way that I feel positive and helpful. I also like making my own hours and I work overnight a lot of times, which means that I don't sleep and it makes writing really angry depressive music a lot easier. Because when you become a vampire, you can really get into that state of mind.
MRR: Does it make you feel more Scandinavian, for your true Scandinavian sound?
Kyle: I feel more like Romanian, you know—
Bryan: Transylvanian.
Kyle:—Caucasian. You know, like the Caucasus Mountains.
Bryan: I teach at a preschool, a private school that costs ***ten thousand dollars a year*** to go to. I got hired there and kept it. I haven't had to pay rent in a long time because I live in a foreclosed house, but that dream will end soon. I hang out with kids whose parents can afford to pay ten thousand dollars a year to send their kid to a preschool. It's not the kids' fault. They're cool.
Barker: I work for myself, and I have for a long time. I run a small business, I don't pay taxes. I sell...





Greg: Are you a rug dealer?
Barker: No, I am not a rug dealer, like some of my friends. But, yeah, I work for myself. It's really liberating, but it's also really dangerous—you have to be grown up. You gotta take shit seriously, but I can throw work to my friends who are kind of in trouble financially. I was a rickshaw mechanic for a long time. I've had a lot of jobs. I've worked a lot of jobs since I was really young. I started working on the farm when I was really young. My family's basically lived off the land and figured out how to do it yourself. So I guess I just grew up and figured that out. I've been really successful at it. It's dangerous, because if I ever get a real job it's going to be like "Where were you for like the last 20 years?—Your resume is pretty fucking lousy."
Greg: "You didn't work 'til you were 39?"
Barker: I made more money than most of my friends with real jobs and I didn't work 30 jobs. It's kind of funny to look at it like that. At the same time I can go on tour whenever I want, help out my friends, and I can say no to any job.
Kyle: Some people really need bosses.
Barker: Yeah, some people really do need bosses, and I mean, that's the, that's part of the danger, because if you don't, you know:...idle minds. Dot dot dot.
Kyle: Big shout out to Bill Pitts.
Greg: Bill Pitts really helped us out.
Bryan: You have any music related questions at all?
Greg: Yeah, you want to ask us a question about our band?
Barker: Or other projects?
MRR: I feel like there was times where I thought maybe you were going to talk about songs and lyrics and stuff, but you didn't. There were lead-ins.
Greg: We should really give a shout-out to Robert Collins for actually really liking us when we first started out...as far as backing us and getting people into us.
Barker: He gave me a lot of confidence, for sure, in the band from him liking us so much, because, who'd even know....
Bryan: RC Cola. Robert Collins. RC. We're a band. Four white guys playing southern rock.
Barker: Our LPs going to come out, then we're going to tour in Europe. Then, we'll tour some more in the US. We're going to get really weird, progressively weirder as a band, and we're all four going to grow apart.

Get in touch for anything.
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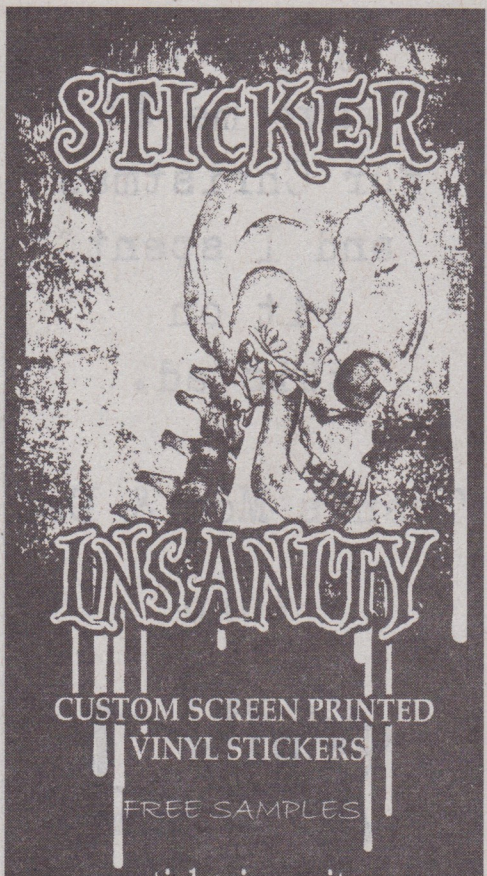

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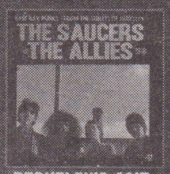

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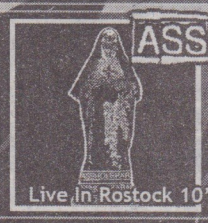

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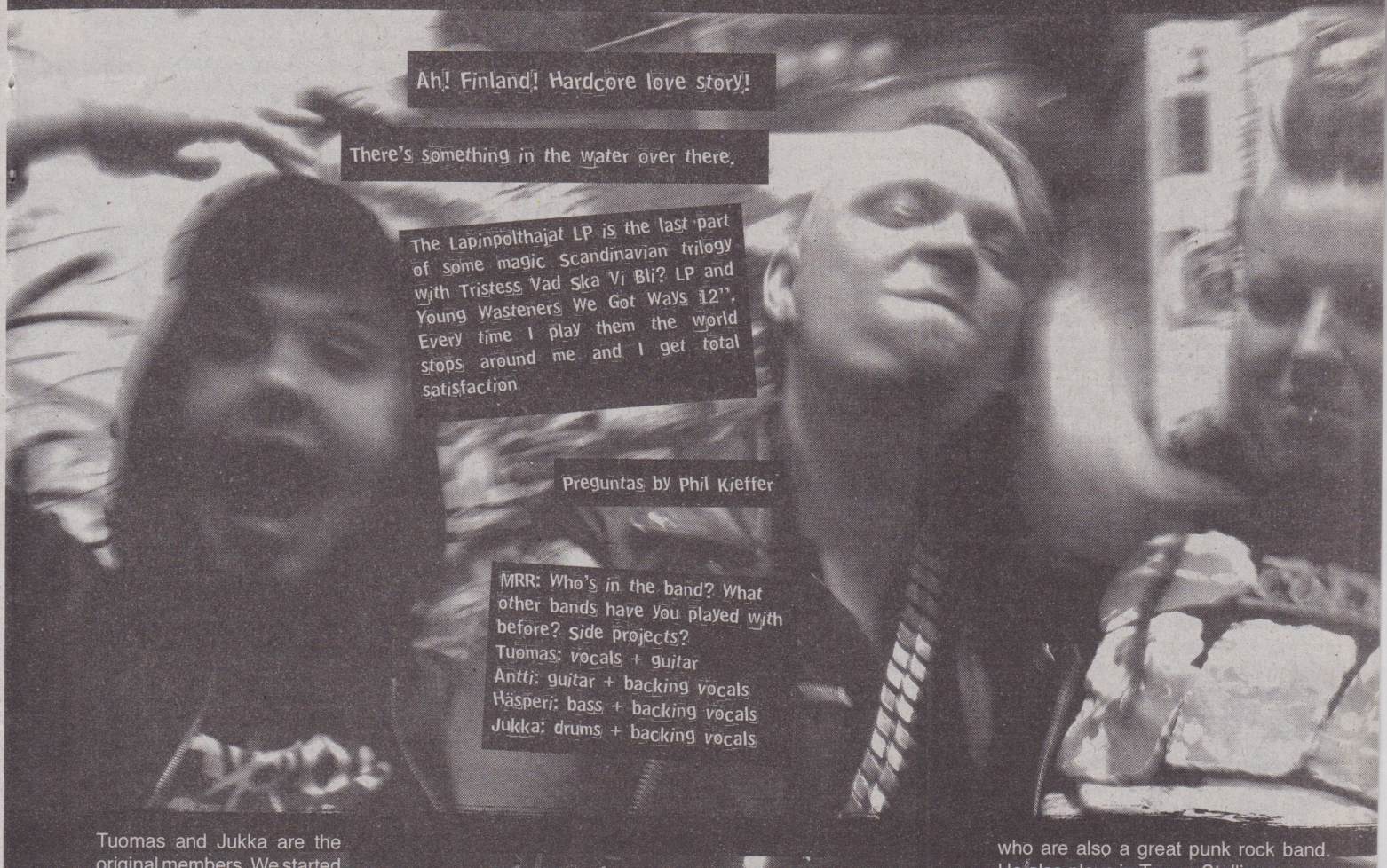


Ah! Finland! Hardcore love story!

There's something in the water over there.

The Lapinpolthajat LP is the last part of some magic Scandinavian trilogy with Tristess Vad Ska Vi Bli? LP and Young Wasteners We Got Ways 12". Every time I play them the world stops around me and I get total satisfaction

Preguntas by Phil Kieffer

MRR: Who's in the band? What other bands have you played with before? Side projects?
Tuomas: vocals + guitar
Antti: guitar + backing vocals
Häsperi: bass + backing vocals
Jukka: drums + backing vocals

Tuomas and Jukka are the original members. We started to play 1997 but stopped playing already around 1999 when we moved away from Rovaniemi. We started to play again in 2009 and recorded some old and new songs for a 7" EP. Soon after, Häsperi joined to play bass. During the recording of the LP we asked Antti to play the second guitar (he is the brother of Tuomas).

Jukka: I also sing in Sotatila and play bass in a new band called Rajat. Some of my other bands from before are Diaspora (drums 1999-2000), Turun Tauti (drums 2000-2003), Kansalaistottelemattomuus (drums 2001-2003), Sotatila (singing 2005-now), and Riistetyt (drums 2007-2010). Häsperi plays also in Diskelmä (guitar) and Surffiveikot (guitar, it's a surf-band). From his earlier bands I would mention at least Neuroottiset Pelimannit (guitar) and KOHU-63 (guitar).

Tuomas: I used to play in Perhearvot ('98 – '01) and Elinvoima ('01 – '07). Right now I'm playing in a project band called Torsos Stallions. Antti used to play in Brigade and now he plays in the Over Attacks, who are also a great punk rock band. He also plays in Torsos Stallions.

MRR: That's a quite impressive list of bands. I'll check the ones I don't know. So are you guys active now? Playing shows? Planning tour?

Tuomas: We are active, we play shows when it is possible and we did a tour here in Finland with Ydinperhe and Käpykaarti during winter 2010. Anyways, the point of Lapinpolthajat has never been to play as many gigs and tours as possible, or even to play as good as possible when on stage, but to have as much fun as possible when we are doing our thing. So far it has worked out quite well, we have had great time and experienced surreal moments with Lapinpolthajat!

Jukka: Yeah, we are playing some gigs every now and then but we only have played inside Finland. We don't try to play as much as possible, only playing if some friend is asking and the gig makes sense. But Finland is small and it gets pointless to play too often in the same cities. There were some plans to go to play outside of Finland but it hasn't worked out so far for some reasons. No pressure with that for me, I have enough things to do anyways, but gig offers are welcome if they

make sense.
Tuomas: By making sense we mean something like: if there's good party with interesting bands, if our guys are available at the moment and if we don't have to pay to travel to the gig then we sure are interested to play a gig.

MRR: So if you're invited to Chaos In Tejas, you'll go for it? Or if I pay for the plane tickets I can book you?
Jukka: I didn't mean that we only want to play the coolest gigs on Earth! If we would play at Chaos in Texas, people would probably not give a shit for us as there would be a GISM reunion at another venue at the same time. Ha ha! Small gigs in fucked up towns are usually also really nice, often much better atmosphere. But if you will book us there we would try to come I guess. Or if you want to make some gigs in France we'd like to come over. But we have no pressure trying to book as many gigs as possible.

MRR: So you like it better when the atmosphere at shows is more friendly, like smaller town shows where all people know and take care of each other? Is the audience kind of placid in Finland? Or usually real fucked up? Are there noticeable differences between Helsinki and the rest of the country? Have you guys made it to the Russian border? Feel like playing Russia soon?
Tuomas: It really doesn't matter if the town is big or small, since punks tend to be friendly and people know each other. I can't compare Finnish audiences to other countries' audiences, since all the gigs I have played have been in Finland so far. In Finland people like to drink a lot and get wasted, but I guess it's this way in every country among punks, and I'm no exception. I have to say Helsinki is bit different when compared to other towns in Finland. Helsinki is a small town in northeast Europe, but people act like they live in New York. But punks are generally nice people even in Helsinki. From my part I have to say I would love to play in Russia! My friend Laiho (Abnormi, Valse Triste, Subvulture) did a tour in there with Valse Triste some time ago, and he has wild and amazing stories to tell about it. He told that even driving from one town to another can be a dangerous adventure with lots of adrenaline and I-cant-believe-I'm-still-alive situations!
Jukka: Finnish punks are pretty drunk-y, but still behave quite well. You don't see many fights like in some other countries; a good example is Puntala Festival with 2000 drunken punks but almost no fights. Small gigs can be boring sometimes, especially nowadays as there are way too many shows happening in bigger towns. Of course at some special gigs you'll get a much more energetic audience and in general at the weekend, when people are boozing. I would say Helsinki is a punk-rock city as Tampere is more '82-HC town/city. Every town has maybe some kind of special reputation but it's still all the same in a way.

I was playing two gigs in Russia with Sotatila last summer. There was a punk festival in a forest that was totally great, until the police came to shut it down. We were lucky to have played before that and the gig was so fucking great! The day before in St. Petersburg the gig was boring. Not many people and nothing happened there. Club was good though and people were nice but I was expecting much more. St. Petersburg is the most western place in Russia so I would not count that one too much when talking of Russia. I've also been in Russia for a weekend with Terveet Kädet like two years ago. The gig in Petroskoi was good and the other gig in St. Petersburg was changed to another location as the Nazis had damaged something at the club where it was supposed to be. When arriving at the second location, the cops came and shut down the electricity. Then we went to the third location, a squat that was on other side of the big city. That was probably too far for people and there were not too many people but the evening was great. If you want to see how is it in Moscow, just search for "Terveet Kädet back in '80s" on You Tube! It would be cool to play in Russia with Lapinpolthajat too of course.

MRR: Looks like you enjoy the tripping in touring more than the "music and lights" action. What's the best Lapinpolttajat touring anecdote so far?
Tuomas: This happened in Oulu: the gig was over and the bar was closing. It was fucking freezing cold, one of the coldest winters for a long time in Finland. Häsperi told us that he arranged a place to stay over night for Lapinpolthajat. He took a lead from the bar and we marched after him. Everybody was both wasted and freezing. After a while we started to ask questions like "Hey Häspe, are you sure where we are? Are we lost?" Reply was classic: "We turn from here! We go with Häsperi's Luck!" Next moment we were on this bridge that was under construction, there were warning signs and fences around it. Using another bridge would have meant walking more freezing miles, so we climbed over the fences. Crossing the bridge was really thrilling since there were only frozen planks as a deck on the bridge, with like 25 inches distance in between them as many of those bricks were away, and we had to jump from one plank to another to get over the river. Somehow the water had stayed free from ice below the bridge, so there was this dark, ice-cold river running below us. Falling would have meant certain death by both drowning and freezing. There were shouts like "Shiiit I can't do this!" and "Watch your step, this plank is fucking slippery!" Antti took a lead in this situation; he shouted "Don't fear! Just one plank at the time! We go to sauna when we get over!" Finally we managed to get over this bridge, all four of us, thrilled and shivering, but alive! And we went to a sauna when we finally arrived to our destination. With Häsperi's Luck!
Jukka: I think similar situations would happen often on tour abroad as we are not the most clever team after a wasted gig. So, I guess it's good and even self-protective that we don't play that many gigs!

MRR: Wow! Punk is still a serious threat! Do you have an opinion with what goes on today at G20 and the cancelled referendum in Greece?
Tuomas: I think any independent nation has right to organize referendums. Problem is that the only way to have an independent nation is to be economically independent. Politicians in Greece have messed up its economy by taking more and more debt in the name of its people. Now leaders of EU, European central bank and IMF think they have the say about what Greece should or should not do. For me it's clear that if people in Greece want to leave EU and have their own currency, they should have the right to choose this path. This is a hard way out from the present situation, but it has worked before: Argentina is example of a nation that chose not to take loans from the IMF and they had hard years, but now the economy is doing okay and the IMF can't tell them what to do: they are independent. If the EU can't handle Greece leaving the EU, then it's weak and rotten and can't survive anyways.

MRR: I would like to talk about politics a little more. For instance, what do you think of Punk people involved in local politics?
Jukka: I think it's good that punks are involved in local and other politics. But I also understand punks/anarchists who don't want to take any part of it and want to build up their own revolutionary way of life. If we try to make some change here, there should be as many different ways to make it as possible…some ways fit some people better than others. Going inside the system is a much stronger way to break it.
Tuomas: Well, I certainly think it's good and important to have punks and/or like-minded people involved in politics. I guess politics are a dirty game in the core essence, and one person can make only little difference, so it's not very rewarding to get involved. Many punks tend to value human rights, animal rights, clean environment, equality and personal freedom more than economical growth and wealth in general. These are values I would like to see have more impact when politicians decree laws. This is why I would like to see more punks and/or like-minded people involved in politics, and also to gain serious political power. Right now it seems most of the political power in the world in general tends to value trade and accumulation of wealth and power at the expense of human and animal rights, clean environment, equality and personal freedom. I don't want things to be

this way.

MRR: Back to the music. So what's up with the Finn scene these days? Is the Puntala Fest still in existence?
Tuomas: There are lots of new bands, and many of the older bands are more or less active. And there are lots of gigs to see, especially here in Helsinki. Couple a months ago I went to see this gig that took place in this old, dilapidated railway tunnel. I was amazed how many young punks there were! Also there is this society, Osuuskunta-82, that is collecting funding to open a punk oriented bar/coffeehouse in Helsinki. I think it is safe to say that the Finnish punk scene is doing very good at the moment. Jukka can tell you more about the Puntala Fest, since he is one of the organizers of the festival.
Jukka: Yeah, I've been on the booking crew of Puntala since a few years. The festival is happening again on the 27th-28th of July (plus the club gigs). If you or someone reading this interview knows a good band interested in playing there you can contact me.

About the scene I would mention a squat in Tampere. There was a house squatted next to the police station two times lately. In Finland the squats seem to be evicted fast but the squatting scene is active too. Also an enormous amount of new good bands should be mentioned.

MRR: Can you please namedrop some of your favorite new bands? I won't tell anyone but the MRR readers.
Tuomas: Death Laser, Eu-Vostoliitto, Porco Dio, Rajat.
Jukka: I would say 1981, Sokea Piste, Projekti 15, Maailmanloppu, Maakuntaradio, Käpykaarti, Vapaa Maa, Nuoret Sankarit, White Tears, Parantola, Armless Children, Antiklimax, Backlash...forgot many, sorry...

MRR: Jukka, can you tell us about your label? How long has it been going?
Jukka: Okay, I started Kämäset Levyt in 2000 with a friend of mine who soon faded away. I've released about 50 records now, mostly punk/hardcore and a lot of Finnish bands. But also some Brazilian, Polish, UK, Spanish etc. bands. Many of the releases are co-releases with other labels. I've been a freak for punk/HC records since a long time, so it felt really easy starting a label. Having an online-distro as well as selling records at gigs is mostly fun as Finnish punks are still interested in music and records. Sure I get also a lot of orders and trades from everywhere. It's mostly a nice hobby, but sometimes releasing a new record can be pain in the ass. Feel free to send me a demo, but I mostly work with friend's bands and my own bands. But hey, this is probably the best place to advertise my future release! So, I'm compiling an LP with non-Finnish bands playing Finnish punk/HC (Finnish language is preferable) so if you have a band or know one in your town, please tell them to contact me!

MRR: What are the notable record shops and mail orders in your area?
Tuomas: Notable record shops in Helsinki: Combat Rock Shop, Keltainen Jäänsärkijä, and Levykauppa X. I don't know about the mail orders, I rarely use them. I buy most of my records from distros and bands directly.
Jukka: In my opinion Combat Rock Shop is the only good record shop in Finland. Other ones are way too expensive and have a lot of shitty bands too. Like Swamp Music in Tampere has a lot of good punk stuff but they are only doing it for the money. There are many good distros in every bigger town, you should support those. Looks like they are now finally opening a record shop in the basement of Hertta (political culture cafe/bar/gig place in Tampere), and that sounds very good in my ears. If you are hunting for rare stuff on your holiday you should visit Plastic Idols and Igipop in Turku, Green Grass Records and Keltainen Jäänsärkijä in Helsinki (many others too) and Aikakone and Swamp in Tampere, but don't expect to find the Nollanollanolla 7" for 5 euros. Here are some names of good Finnish mail orders: Kaaos Korporaatio, Tuska & Ahdistus, Hätäapu, Raakanaama, P.Tuotanto (the oldest one), and Roku Records. Two first ones are from Tampere.

MRR: Last words?
Tuomas: Thank you for making this interview! By the way, there are awesome new releases on the way, I can recommend: Käpykaarti´s new 7" and Abnormi´s new 7". And last night I went to see Kovaa Rasvaa on the gig, I didn't know anything about the band but I was totally amazed, fucking great hardcore!

HELLO PUNKS! HERE IS AN INTERVIEW BY AMAZING AND UNDERRATED EARLY '90S HC PUNK BAND FROM KANAZAWA CITY, JAPAN,

DAMNABLE EX

INTERVIEW BY THOMAS MAYHUGH, PHOTOS BY DAISHI NAKASHIMA

MRR: Can you give us a history of the band? When you started, and why you wanted to play hardcore punk?

Ryo: I started when I was fifteen or sixteen years old, around 1987. I saw the band's faith in hardcore punk and I thought I would like to do it too. About two years later we got the present members.

Chika-Yan: Until Mon-p, our guitarist, joined DEZ we didn't have stable members. In the beginning the band name was only "DEZ", but when we released the split with Amen from MCR we put "Damnable Excite Zombies!"

Marky: That was a long time ago, I don't remember. I was only into japancore. I can only do this kind of music. I was playing in a copy band with Furu-Chan and then I moved to Kyoto and joined Brain Death as their vocalist. I came back to Kanazawa because Brain Death broke up. I asked Chikamura-San to play in a band with me, and then I asked Ryo to play with us as well. Ryo had already started DEZ, but when some members quit, he asked us to join. So, we don't know who joined whose band.

MRR: Who are the current members?

Ryo: DEZ is Marky on vocals, Ryo on bass, Mon-P on guitar, Furu-Chan on guitar, and Chika-Yan on drums.

MRR: Can you tell us about your local scene in the '80s and early '90s? What bands were active in the Kanazawa area?

Ryo: The active hardcore bands were Bad Trap and Iconoclast.

MRR: What bands inspire you?

Ryo: Inspire me? Not many.

Marky: Lip Cream, Systematic Death, Gudon, and Chicken Bowels.

Mon-P: My first hardcore band was Gism, but now Half Years, Lip Cream, Outo, '80s, and '90s USHC have the most intense influence on me.

Chika-Yan: I started with the Stalin and then got to UK stuff such as GBH and Discharge. After those, I listened to Japanese hardcore only. After 1985, it was Lip Cream, Outo, etc.

MRR: Was DEZ ever able to tour across Japan or play any particularly large gigs?

Ryo: We have never done a tour of Japan. We went to Nagoya, Tokyo, Toyama, and Niigata a couple of times. When the Burning Spirits tour came to Kanazawa, we played with them. We have also played larger gigs with bands like Lip Cream, Outo, SOB, and Bastard.

MRR: Do you think it is easier for bands to tour if they are from a big city like Tokyo or Osaka? Was it hard to be a punk band in a smaller city like Kanazawa?

Mon-P: Maybe there was a difference between big and small city bands 20 years ago, as if people needed to move to Tokyo to play in a band, but there is no way for everyone to move, and even living in a small town can be very cool! Most Kanazawa bands like it. Of course, sometimes there are not many people in the audience because of the smaller population, but it doesn't matter because I'm doing what I like to do: playing in a band.

Chika-Yan: Kanazawa is a small city for sure, but I never feel inconvenienced playing in a band there.

Ryo: Probably the only problem for bands playing in a small city like Kanazawa is the price of renting a venue.

Marky: Smaller cities are easier to play. Relationships are easy, there are less rivals, but not as large of an audience.

MRR: In the early '90s were you actively trading and writing letters to other bands overseas? How did a Japanese band get paired up with the Finnish band Amen and end up doing 7" on a German label in 1992? Has DEZ a good fan base overseas?

Ryo: We weren't really trading or exchanging with people overseas.

Chika-Yan: Marky and Datu-Kun, a former Iconoclast drummer who played in DEZ briefly, were in contact with them. Finally, we released a split 7" with Amen from Germany, but it was only after we released the split with Amen that they contacted us, so we asked Kouzou, Iconoclast's guitarist, to translate our communication with them.

MRR: How did you end up releasing a discography CD on a US label?

Chika-Yan: We got an offer from some band in Nagoya once, but it didn't work out.

Ryo: When we reformed DEZ and played live in 2010, Kobayashi-San from Ashtray, who had moved to the US, came back to Japan to see our show. After she went back to the US, Zach from Net Very Nice records asked her to make contact with us about releasing the CD.

MRR: Which songs are your favorites?

Mon-P: "Blood Rain," "Get Back," "Pain," "Its Just," and "See Through!"

Ryo: I can't pick which song I like best, but generally I like driving songs.

Chika-Yan: "Out of Order Brain."

Marky: "In My Heart," "See Through," and "Rise & Fall."

FC: "Feel," because I feel great when I'm playing it!

MRR: What sort things inspire DEZ lyrics, and who writes them?

Marky: Daily life. I write lyrics and half the music too. The other half is by Ryo, Mon-P and Furu-Chan. Mostly they're about daily life and complaining to other people, but lately I have been complaining to myself.

MRR: Speaking of daily life, what sort of jobs do DEZ have? I heard that Marky is a great fisherman. What other things does DEZ do in their spare time?

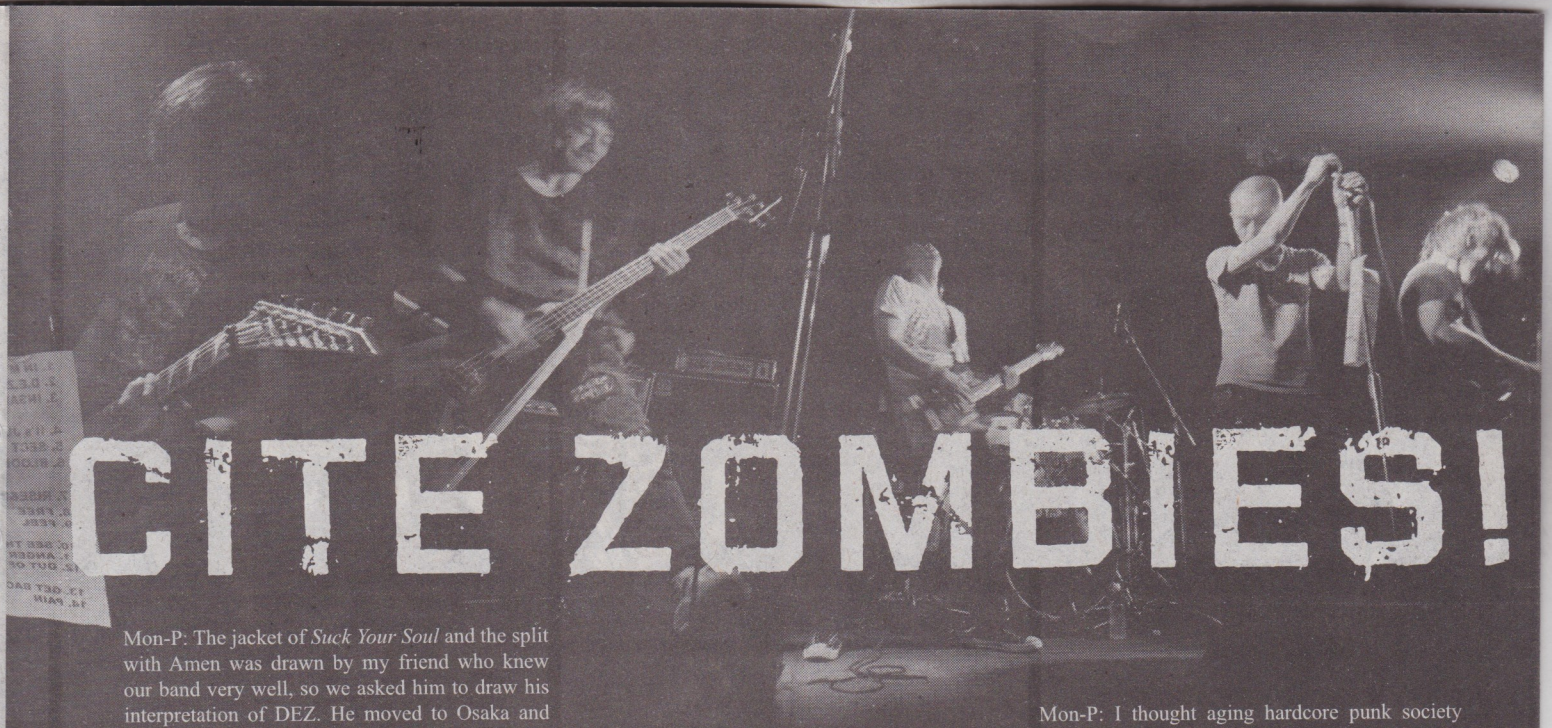
Mon-P: My job is related to fuel. It's kerosene delivery. Unjust, blue-collar jobs in Japan seem too low level for me and they're very hard work, but I'm working hard for my family. I read Manga or surf the Internet when I have free time, but my young daughter often interrupts me.

Chika-Yan: I'm just an office worker. When I have free time, I fish or play pachinko.

Marky: I work in a great bakery! I'm fishing, drinking beer, and sleeping in my free time.

Ryo: I'm a company employee. When I have free time, I go play pachinko.

MRR: Can you tell us about the artwork to *Suck Your Soul*? It shows someone using a fishing pole to get money. Did you choose it or did you request the artwork, and what is the meaning of the artwork?



CITE ZOMBIES!

Mon-P: The jacket of *Suck Your Soul* and the split with Amen was drawn by my friend who knew our band very well, so we asked him to draw his interpretation of DEZ. He moved to Osaka and drew jackets for Rise From the Dead, UA, etc. He can make money from his artwork. He was also playing in a band named Ichiban Boshi Kurū with the former drummer of Zouo. I played with them when I was in Green Machine. He was powerful.
Marky: Probably Jesus fishing. We are not really sure what the true meaning is. I would accept it as the irony of making money. Each person will have his own impression.

MRR: Why did you choose to stop playing?
Ryo: We just didn't set up any shows and gradually broke up.
Chika-Yan: I left because of my job. I was transferred to another city. Kin-Chan, a drummer living in Toyama, filled in briefly, but he didn't last long. After I came back to Kanazawa I started a new band called 13 Year Holocaust but it didn't last long.
Mon-P: 13 Year Holocaust was started by Ryo, Chika-Yan, and me.
Marky: It got stale.

MRR: Not many bands in Japan get back together and start playing again, they usually move on to new bands. Why did DEZ choose to start playing again after they broke up?
Ryo: We went drinking with friends and Ando, a member of bad trap, asked me "We are planning a gig at the end of the year, could you reunite DEZ and play with us?" We were drunk and planned to just reunite for that one show, but we got an offer for a CD and everybody wanted to keep playing together.

MRR: What sort of bands is DEZ playing with now and how are your recent gigs?
Ryo: We are playing with One Day, Bad Trap and Degrade, who are from Kanazawa. We played with Wild//Tribe in Toyama during our Japanese tour in May this year. We have two shows coming up next month in October.

MRR: Are you mostly playing to new young punks, punks your age, or both?
Mon-P: Most of the audience is punks from our generation, but increasingly young punks have been coming out, which is really great!
Ryo: I know old punks who are bringing children to our shows.

MRR: What sort of bands and music do you listen to now?
Mon-P: Half Years, Outo, '80s and '90s USHC, Citizens Arrest, Tragedy, Limp Wrist, Asshole Parade, Broken Needle, etc. Also, '70s and '80s Japanese popular songs such as "Kazuki Tomokawa" and "Kan Mikami."
Ryo: Comes, Clay, Lip Cream, Gauze, and Crude.
Chika-Yan: Systematic Death, Lip Cream, and Outo. Lately, I've been listening to the reunited Systematic Death's new releases.
Marky: Judgement (vo. Jhajha), and Ecodamned.
FC: Gastunk and Rob Zombie.

MRR: What do you think about the Japanese and worldwide punk scene today compared to the late '80s and early '90s? What differences are there, and is it better or worse?
Marky: I don't think there has been a change. Everybody, now and then, is still doing great.
Ryo: I think it is getting better. Many overseas bands are coming to Japan on tour.
Mon-P: I think it's getting overwhelmingly better. It is much easier to release music than before, and fewer bands are quitting. You can get overseas information on the Internet. There is now an especially strong connection between bands in hardcore punk.

MRR: It seems like many Japanese punks are in it for life and never stop loving hardcore punk or playing in bands. The people in Gauze, for example, are around 50 years old. In America and Europe it seems more common for punks to stop playing in bands or going to as many gigs when they get older. Why do you think the Japanese punk scene has so many great old punks?
Mon-P: I thought aging hardcore punk society was common everywhere, but it doesn't sound like it. I'm glad to hear so many overseas bands from the '80s and '90s reuniting. I hope legendary bands like Ripcord will reunite.
Ryo: I don't know why. I guess we have backbone.

MRR: How did you feel about Lip Cream's reunion?
Mon-P: I couldn't go see their show because I was working. I wanted to see Naoki.
Chika-Yan: I couldn't go but I wanted to see Pill-San's drumming.
Marky: I wanted to go, but I couldn't because of work.
Ryo: After I found out it was already over, but I saw a little bit on YouTube.

MRR: What does DEZ have planned for the future?
We will go anywhere if it is possible for all members. We want to play more. Please invite us!

MRR: Will DEZ write new songs?
Mon-P: Yes, we are writing new songs and we will be recording them next year.
Chika-Yan: We have a slower writing pace now.

MRR: How can other punks get in contact with DEZ?
Ryo: Write to dezjapn@gmail.com or www.myspace.com/1004932737.

MRR: Is there anything else you want to say?
Marky: I hope everybody listens to the DEZ discography CD, especially young punks. If you feel anything listening to it, even just a little bit, then doing DEZ is worthwhile.
Ryo: Languish Japan after our earthquake. Don't be overcome! Keep it up Japan!
Mon-P: Hardcore is not only for teenagers or old punks. It is yours!

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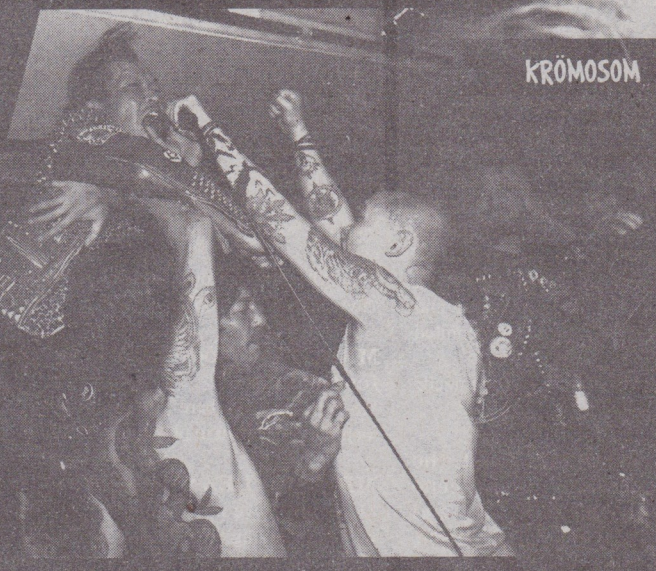
LIFE



KRÖMOSOM

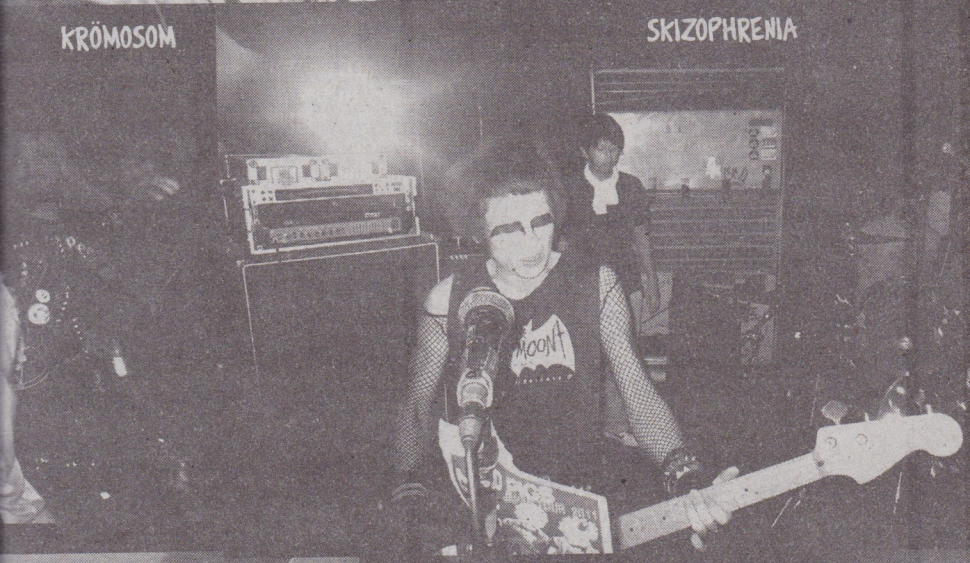
SKIZOPHRENIA

END OF POLLUTION

LIFE

KRÖMOSOM TOUR PHOTOS BY YEAP. CHI

KRÖMOSOM



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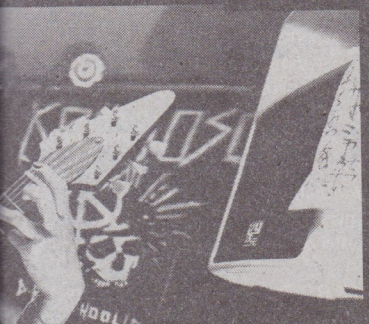

LIFE

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KRÖMOSOM TOUR PHOTOS BY YEAP CHIYORI

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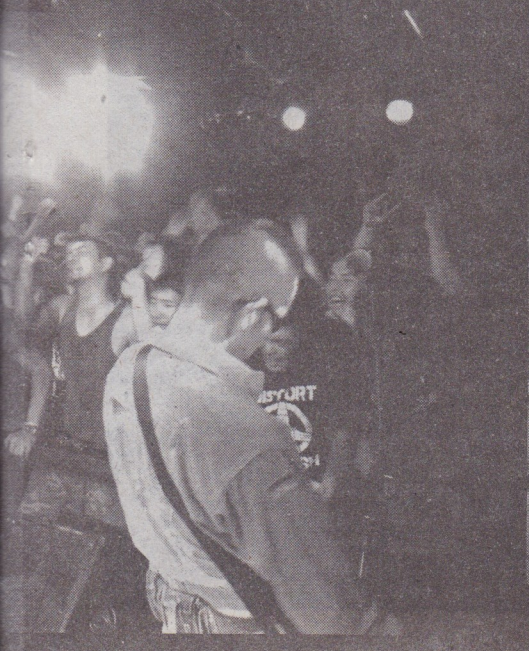


CARBURETOR DUNG

Last summer I had the opportunity to tour round South East Asia for a few weeks with my hardcore band Atomgevitter, and was incredibly fortunate to be able to share the stage with perhaps Malaysia's most infamous punk band Carburetor Dung. Not only is their music amazing, but also they are an incredibly funny and down to earth bunch of guys, and with their latest LP being released internationally I felt it was time for the international punk scene to become reacquainted with these seasoned punk rockers. Read on and check out their new LP. This originally ran in Ploppypants zine, and here now is an edited version for all you MRR *punkers…*

Interview by Roddy Floppypants, photos by Ady Shutterscream and Yee I-Lann

Carburetor Dung is:
Fendi - Bass, Joe Kidd - Guitar, Tom Bollocks - Guitar, Bullet - Drums, Alak - Vocals , Manan - Chief Dung Flinger

MRR: Hello good sirs. It's 2012. That means the Dung has been getting flung for a pretty long time, but how has it evolved? When exactly did the band form and what do you see as the biggest differences between the band of the '90s and the band of today?
Fendi: Hellooo from us over here in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the land of endless summer! Hello to all the punks out there from the past, present and future. Fuckin' hell! I haven't been answering interviews for quite some time now. Feels a bit weird, eh?
Yup, it's been a pretty long time. Can't even remember when Joe and I started the band...probably around 1990 or 1991. Maybe. There have been a lot of changes since then, but I don't wanna talk about the past much. The most important thing is now and the future, and now we have a couple of great old friends playing with us. Alak on vocals, Tom on guitar and Bullet on drums, and not to forget Manan as the main drive behind the band, the one who has been kicking our collective behinds for the last four to five years, the one who got us all organized. He's the unpaid tour/stage manager, roadie, driver, back-line provider and more.
. Musically, I believe we are still playing the same basic punk rock which we have always been playing, but in terms of sound, unlike in the past, the band is now pretty sure of what we want, and don't want to sound like. As for myself, in terms of progress, I still can't fuckin' tune my bass...hehehe. Luckily there's always this electronic tuner shit. I never considered myself as a musician and still don't so, for me it's just fuckin' pure anger'n'energy and DIY.
Alak: Hey, Roddy. Around the time Carburetor Dung was formed I was still a school kid in search of angry music, and their songs were fitting for the rebellious teenage mode I was in. During that time, there were not as many bands as there are today, and the bands that existed then seemed to be more sincere, especially in terms of having their very own unique sound. They were also really good musically, and as a result, the scene was so diverse in so many ways.

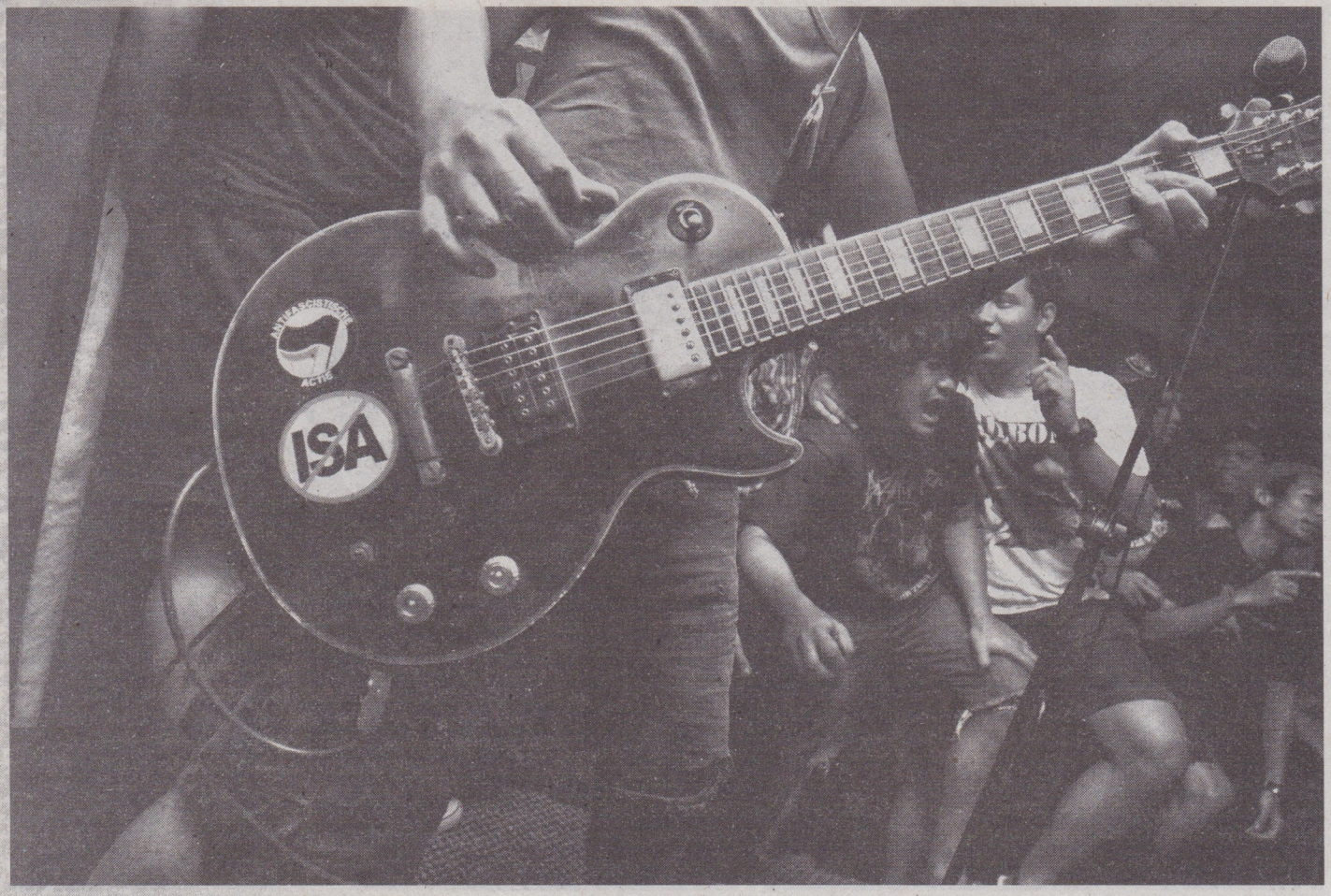
Looking at the enormous number of bands that have formed since then, and this continues till today, the scene had somehow clustered into new pockets of sub-genres, with most bands mainly a copy of another. It is as if the will and the struggle to go beyond the generic mold of punk and rock and roll have been forgotten and discarded. These days it's very rare to find bands that can stand on their own. There are certainly bands that are really good at what they do and seem to stand taller than the rest in the pack, but the amount of bands with raw originality are lacking, especially when compared to the local bands of the '90s.

I got Dung's first cassette from a small retail shop in the suburbs I lived in and it was one of those releases from Malaysian bands which really amazed me with their own style of music. Their empowered lyrics really did speak to me and many other teenagers. So since these past eight or nine years, it's kind of weird for me to find myself being in the band, that is after years and years of watching and listening to them.
Joe: Hello, Sir Hot Roddy. This is the first time the whole band appeared together in an interview. Well, apart from Tom who's too busy looking for a cure for veteran punk hair loss. And, yeah, so sorry for taking four and half months to send this over. It's the typical Malaysian malaise. Totally not of our doing. Honest.

As Fendi said, I can't really remember the exact formation in detail, but let's put it somewhere in late 1991. That means we've passed the twenty year mark, but we are too lazy to throw a party.

On the "biggest differences" between then and now, nothing much. Between me and Fendi, we're older of course, and we've lost quite a number of great friends as band members come and go through the years, our lives have been taking their own strange twists and turns, but as a band, we haven't changed much. Every new year we'd tell ourselves we're gonna be more proactive and every year we've stayed on the same sloth course, still taking decades to release anything new, rehearse only when there's a gig coming up, never work on any new material until the very last minute, and still promising ourselves to start playing proper..

So after twenty years of Dung, I still can't do guitar solos for shit and Fendi still needs my ears when tuning up, but we keep playing shows whenever and wherever we can. That said, I think Dung is at its best of times nowadays, the current line-up is again the best of



friends, especially with old fart Bullet, my oldest closest buddy, in tow. I also believe there's a lot more confidence in what we do nowadays. Fendi doesn't need to take a big crap every time we're going on-stage, numbing the nerves with drinks don't work anymore, and I remember the chords better nowadays. It used to be horrible.

If there's a marked "progression," that would be us changing gear with the music as the years pass us by, so instead of going slower and mellower with age like many of the "veteran" bands over here, we're going the opposite way. Friends are saying that we're stepping harder and faster as more and more grey hair popped out on our faces. People who liked our songs back in the early '90s are not happy with our current lack of melodic sing-a-long material, but that's how it is. You can't expect us to stay the same after all these years. We're not The Ramones.

Bullet: Hey, Joe, I'm young!! Only you and the rest are old farts!! I'll only be applying for my identification card next week!! Buahhahahaha!

Carburetor Dung, ehh? Well from 1986 to 1990 I was a thrasher, a thrash-metaller, yes, yes, I'm one of them big hair shits, with slim-fit pants needing the assistance of plastic bags tied around the ankles to slide into, and arms heavy with studded armbands. Well, punks wore studs, too, so that's probably irrelevant. Anyway, what I needed then was a "voice," my very own voice, and I didn't care what type of music or noise would provide it. That "voice" would also be something which defies any form of totalitarian structures, and any corporate rock shits (fuck you, Baziz Bakar, Semua Bakar, Eddy Fernandez and shit sucker Tony bald head man. See? I'm legal savvy you know?!).

I was also into all these "techie" things, being a geeky dropout med student helped. During one of the many DIY experiments, I was building my own 4-track machine and accidentally reverse-engineered the old double-deck cassette player into an echo box (darn it, Joe has been telling people I turned the cassette-player into a fridge! All lies!). To remedy these constant technological fuckups, one day in 1989 Joe and I made the ultimate pact! A pact way beyond the crossroads-style deal-with-the-devil pacts. This is sweaty droppings serious fuck shit pact!! Joe will start a DIY label while I will learn audio engineering and build a recording studio so together we will RULE THE WORLDDDD!!!! Buahhahahahahhaa!

To cut things short, a couple of years later Joe started his label AGE, while I quit my thrash metal bands and built Dreamwalk Studio. From there on I engineered and co-produced many, many DIY projects with Joe. Funny thing was I never had a band of my own during that time. Too busy manning the consoles. Sometime, years later in 2000, Joe and Fendi restarted their old project The Shitworkers and I was called in to play drums. It's a proper full-on power-trio which lasted for a year, played four shows but never, ever recorded properly. We wrote a lot of songs, though, so something needs to be done with those songs one day.

When Joe and Fendi were looking for a replacement drummer for Dung to record a song in 2005, they got in touch and asked me for help. So I asked Joe, "Hey buddy, can I get a Ferrari? Can we open for Motorhead? Can I hang out with Britney?" and Joe said, "But of course you can!" and so I said, "Oh yeah?! When do we start?" So Dung recorded that song "Mari Nyanyi Menjilat" and I stayed on, and now it's been seven years of fun.

During Dreamwalk times, Dung was different. Most of them don't know jack shit about how to play! But they have big hearts, a sense of good taste and humor; they were funny, always happy, never did they care what people were saying. All they ever wanted was to play, and play they did. Taking the DIY philosophy to heart, they were always relevant (I'm romanticizing...) and when they played I would always be smiling while my heart glows!

Anyway, I'm so blessed to have been a part of that scene during those early days in the '80s. It was real, totally genuine starving street kids playing real powerful badass music. Corporate rocking major labels back then were jerking their own balls off because they can't have us. We refused to be tamed. Nowadays bands seem to sound much alike and they look too well-fed, somehow not rebellious enough or starving or hungry enough to have that special edge. Maybe that's due to bands' members now having well-paid proper jobs instead of washing dishes at a street-side food stall, and that the public inexplicably seems to finally accept this sort of music as a norm.

As in any other art forms though, you can't cheat the medium. For me, in music, the nut is always in the recording. If the recording does

not kick ass, it won't pass (See? I'm rhyming). But the good thing is the scene is alive and well, however I find it lacking the fire we used to exude years ago. It's just not as wild as it used to be. Well that's what I think and if you have problems with that we can settle this outside, you punk you!

Manan: I've been a fan since the dinosaurs roamed this mud ball! The band's evolution in terms of sound, lyrics, and performance has definitely "grown up," and that makes me their biggest fan now. As the band added more years to its existence, the sound has become wiser, while the lyrics have become a lot more penetrating and personal. Since I joined and helped out with the workings of the band these past few years, I could see for myself how dealing with, instead of ignoring reality has shaped the guys to be a lot more mature in juggling the demands of their personal lives with the needs and ethos of the band. It's not an easy thing. A lot of the times these guys would defy their individual needs (usually economic decisions) and forgo the easy way out, staying true to their DIY roots. Never have they compromised their beliefs for that ever-present dangling easy money or the promises of easy lives. Their own life experiences have become the DNA of the band and that has kept everyone together to continue to do what they love most.

MRR: As far as I know, you guys must be one of the longest running Malaysian punk bands and certainly one of the first to have their music released overseas. Most bands split up after just a few years or releases. What has kept your fire burning so long? Have you yet to reach your full potential? Do you still have something to say?

Fendi: I don't think the band is anywhere near its full potential, but that's because of our own laziness...hahaha. As for us still together and playing, I think this crazy world around us is the one to blame. It keeps the fire burning. I see a lot of people in the punk/underground scene come and go, bands constantly splitting up around us, oh well, that is happening everywhere else in the world, too, but for me, playing in a band is still one of the best outlets to channel my ideas/creativity/anger/frustrations/"rasa" (feeling) while having a hell lot of *fun*, too. I mean, if it's not *fun* anymore then what's the point?

Alak: If I'm not mistaken, there were a couple of Malaysian bands released on 7"s under small foreign labels before Dung's 7" EP. Anyway, looking at how Joe and Fendi managed to sustain Dung for so long, and also their camaraderie with other members who were with them since the first line-up, I reckon it's mostly because of the sincere friendship and passion which ties everyone together. Everybody, including members who had left Dung, are still the band's good friends, so there's no animosity or total break with the past, and for me, it's certainly comfortable to be with friends who share the same fire, even though they are all old farts.

Manan: There's always something to be said. The world is fucked up enough, so there's a very, very long list of grievances and resentment. It's endless. That is unless you're too fucked-up to care. Potential? I believe what the band had been doing is only the tip of the iceberg of what we want to do. Personally, I believe we haven't really rolled up our sleeves and harness the real "budu punk power" just yet. Somehow this reminds of *Pinky and the Brain*...Every day when The Brain wakes up, Pinky would ask what are we doing today and the answer will always be the same, "To rule the world!"

Joe: There were two 7"s put out overseas (France) featuring bands from Malaysia during the mid to late '90s, way before Dung's only 7" came out in the UK. They were the *Hapuskan ISA* 7" comp and also The Bollocks 7", both pretty rare now. At the core of it all, we are longtime friends and by that virtue alone, there's a strong bond keeping it all intact. The next reason will be our collective itch to "rock'n'roll" y'know? Seeing bands blasting-off on-stage will always make me jealous, and since I'm not gonna stop going to shows and check out these bands, I'd better keep my own band going and join in the fun.

I'm also envious of some of them youths out there, especially when they do things right, but I don't want to be that fat, balding geezer seething with envy. Bitching about the "long gone good ol' days" is just not on. We're not dead just yet, so we'll jump in too, as long as the back holds up! When we were in Java traveling and playing with our good friends there (hello, Kunx!), a lot of the kids were rather surprised to know how old me and Bullet were ("anak-anak punk" over 45!), they started calling us "om" (uncle) and announced the fact every time we start a set. We never thought of ourselves as "uncles" before but when you're in Indonesia you can't escape the fact. The kids at the shows were mostly mid-teenagers, real kids. At a festival near Jakarta, there were around 2,000 punks and I can safely say none of them were older than 25!

As for the band's "potential", I do agree with Fendi. I've never been satisfied with our output, not ever. I can't stand listening to our first album now, and the second one is only marginally bearable. Personally, it's like the band had only used up 30% of what we could to do, so we'll continue shitting our pants out for that other 70%. I pity the kids in the current scene who are dead tired of us. I can almost hear them saying, "That bunch of geezers, why are they still around? They are always around! Why can't they just fuck off?!" Well, we'll fuck off as soon as we're ready, mate!

Bullet: I'm getting pissed now!! Hey guys! For the millionth time, I'm not old. It's only the brain cells that are dying, OK? The band's longevity... Well, it's part ginseng, part manukah honey, and part watermelon (hurrah! to natural Viagra!!). It's nothing really. We never looked at it as a timeline sort of activity thingy, we just play! That's it. Yes, we have soooo many plans with Dung. We want to tour the States and EU, open for Motorhead, getting Steve Albini to produce our next album (we need a gun, as he's not cheap!), going on recording holidays while sailing on a million-dollar yacht in the Caribbean, kicking back, smoking big cigars with Castro, pay Monty Python to reform for a video shoot, etc.

On the band's potential, I think Dung is still an infant. We still need to work at breaking out of that generic punk rock trap. We need to lay bare the very essence of being a free man! In short we need to learn our instruments, boys!! Ha!

Like what Tun Manan (YB, AKM, UUT, ASSK, LIM, DK KEDAH, DK PERLIS, DK KEPALA BATAS, note: this is how we address high-level lordship over here) says, "We need to have our own flag, sovereignty, currency and also our own broadcast station!!!" Buahhhahahahahha! ("buah" = fruits, so fruitshahahaha!).

MRR: Most of the songs I've heard by you which are sung in English have a pretty strong political content, but coming from a personal angle, and I find the pro-democracy message on the *Sheep Farming in Malaysia* 7" to be quite interesting in a scene which usually rallies behind the anarchy flag. Would you like to talk a little about these lyrics and your thoughts on democracy and the recent protests in Kuala Lumpur, or the punk scene in the Western world's obsession with anarchy?

Fendi: I think the recent protests and rallies in Kuala Lumpur are important in waking up the Malaysian government to the real seething public anger out there. They can't keep fucking us up forever, people are not *sheep*!!

Alak: Since Malaysia is governed by the same political "masters" who have been in power for more than 50 years, it leaves people no other choice but to go on the streets and join in the rallies and marches. Currently there are no basic structures in place in terms of enabling the more radical ideas to flower amongst the masses, so those ideas are taking a backseat as we work on a more general or basic level of political awakening.

Joe: Well, I have been on a journey which ended up with embracing "anarchism" as a nice, noble dream, one that would never be a reality as long as people are people as they are now—selfish, greedy, petty, ignorant, uncaring, shallow, prejudiced, etc.

These songs we have here are very simple, nothing heavy on the ism-skisms. They are all just based on universal ideals, basic rights and needs. We don't go heavy on revolution right here and now, burn the flag, torch Starbucks to the ground, brick the police, and kill the oppressors. I'm skeptical if those sorts of actions would ever substantially change anything, especially when people are still tightly and willfully blinkered and ignorant of their very own perpetual serfdom.

Different people have different ways of calling for changes, and I believe it's important that everyone play their own roles according to where their values lie, but for us, we would rather encourage people to do the basics: First and foremost educate ourselves, open up and see the world and its structures beyond what it is being shown to them. Instead of being herded, ignorant and cowed with fear, we should gather up our confidence, escape the confines, and be loudly critical, and also stand up and fight for what's right. It's all based on common sense, and doing the right thing, but there are not a lot of people with common sense nowadays, especially where fear overrides everything.

I believe what we have now will soon self-destruct, a collapsing world that has gone too far in exploiting its finite resources, blindly driven by a violently oppressive system so greedy and bloated with debt that it's

gonna be soon sucked into a massive catastrophic economic blackhole. None of those divisive, petty, dogmatic and ghettoized "ism-skisms" out there is gonna be much of help unless people acknowledge the inevitable, come together now as a substantial non-hierarchical well-informed and determined force and work for practical radical solutions.

Yes, I'm as skeptical as any sane person out there, but then again that doesn't mean I wouldn't challenge impending defeat and work towards achieving the common goal of dismantling the current corrupt, dehumanizing power structures. Otherwise, we can just stop now, get constantly drunk, be a Discharge-clone and sing endlessly about some foreign wars to the very same bunch of friends too numb to care for anything beyond the latest rare distorted 7"s. I doubt Bullet will look as good in crusty, unwashed spikey-studded black and boots, but we'll call that band Disdung with a fucked-up monochrome logo, sing in Finnish, put out only collectable 7"s with pictures of skulls and dead people, and religiously tour Japan.

Bullet: Let me get one thing straight, the struggle with oneself, being in existence among the sheep here, is nothing compared to being a "free man." We have been romanticizing this so called cause for much too long already. Being idealistic is never practical, but nonetheless it is what changes are made of. Without such people there will be no cause to rally for, nor to fight for, and no legacy to be made of.

What's the question again? Political content, OK, well, someone has to say it. Everyday among the masses I feel like I wanna puke! All they ever wanted was good pay at the end of the day, to put food on the table, clothing for the kids, Ferrari for the fathers and liposuction for the mothers.

With 60% earning middle class income and below USD1500 per month take-home pay, these so called "masses" just want a decent life for their families. No one will rally behind the anarchy flags here! Honestly, our current political-activist scene is a joke! People are so programmed that all they got in their head is, "I hope mummy cooked good curry for dinner tonight," and that's during the rally! Hahahahaha!

When we caused a riot in 2008 where 5,000 people stormed the stage we're playing on, those people were supposed to be smart, liberal and on the "outside!" But yet they were the ones who started throwing things, threatened to maim, and caused us unnecessary trauma! So to be an "anarchist" here in Malaysia is like being a virgin in Las Vegas. It is not impossible, but at the end of the day you'd get fucked for sure.

With the locals proven to be obedient, subservient and loyal subjects, our previous colonial masters, the British Lords have prepared us to be good working class people feeding off the crumbs from the ever so present ruling class here for so many years to come. It is who we are and maybe, just maybe we might be able to break away from such enslavement and, horror of horrors (!), become a part of the ruling class itself! (Tun!! Let's make sure we'll be bloated billionaires next year, shall we?!). Did I answer the question? I'm a bit famished now, wouldn't mind a scone, Jeffry!

Manan: To tell you the truth I only see democracy as just another tool to start wars. I don't have very high regards for the Western leaders or even those who are on the high-chairs this side of the planet. The only thing that is constant is oppression. Your mind, your belief structure, enslaves your past and your future. *Control*. I'm sure there's a lab in some secret bunker somewhere with mad fuckers experimenting on new methods of mind control. Big corporations are the devil. Let's be honest here, *money, greed, highly paid whores*...over priced grape juice. You want chaos, you create it. We're bombarded with consumerism bullshit every second while people are starving somewhere. Big Mac Super-Sized for 0.99 cents. All you can think of is Big Macs for 0.99 cents. Fucking pissing me off.

MRR: You also have some songs which are in the Malay language, and Joe Kidd has told me this is something you want to do more of in the future. Can you tell us a bit about what subjects are covered with these lyrics and why you chose to change to Malay? Will you include English translations with your future recordings?

Fendi: It's more challenging writing in the Malay language. I guess when we write in Malay, the usage and selection of words to be used is important, especially when we fuck up the Malay words/terms in our own way, bringing in local dialects and street slangs into the process. It is much more fun while keeping it raw and direct. Definitely we'll include English translations with our releases. Joe is good at it.

News

Band not sorry over 'revealing act'

On Carburetor Dung...

Alak: It's rather frustrating to be singing songs with empowering messages and then realize that a lot of people who listened to our songs don't really get what the songs are about. I also find it tragic that there are a lot of local kids who don't know any English at all nowadays. I mean, when I was younger, I would get out of my way to learn the language, just to understand what the bands are singing about. I learned it from the songs! On the other hand, it's funnier to realize that some kids can't even understand the gist of it when bands sing in plain Malay! Some people just don't get it.

Manan: The meaning can be the same, but the feeling would be different. Just like the Maori's traditional war cry, the "haka," you just can't translate it because the feeling ain't the same. There's a sense of pride as well when singing in our native tongue. You might not understand a word we are saying but you would feel that tense raw energy the words bring. That said, I think we should continue using whatever language that fits.

Joe: The subjects in the Malay songs are thematically the same to the ones in English. In fact some of them started as English songs. The song "Aku, Buku & AUKU" started life as "Head Like A Hole," about the so-called "leaders" of the country who have nothing between their ears. When we changed that to "Aku, Buku & AUKU," we zeroed-in the topic to the draconian law that is AUKU (Akta Universiti dan Kolej Universiti or University and University College Act), where students at the local universities and colleges are forbidden to be involved in any forms of activities deemed as "political," with the students threatened with expulsions and subjected to intimidation by the powers that be.

So the difference between the original which was in English and the new version in Malay is that the new one is a hell lot more specific and targeted instead of being a broad comment. I believe most of the Malay songs we have now are like that. They are mostly no longer put forth in a vague, sweeping generalization like before. And that's because of the language used; instead of worrying whether our overseas friends would comprehend what we're trying to impart, we thought, "Fuck it," this is about this part of the world, so let's do it proper. By doing that, it removed some barriers we had before, and it becomes freer to be more specific about a certain local subject.

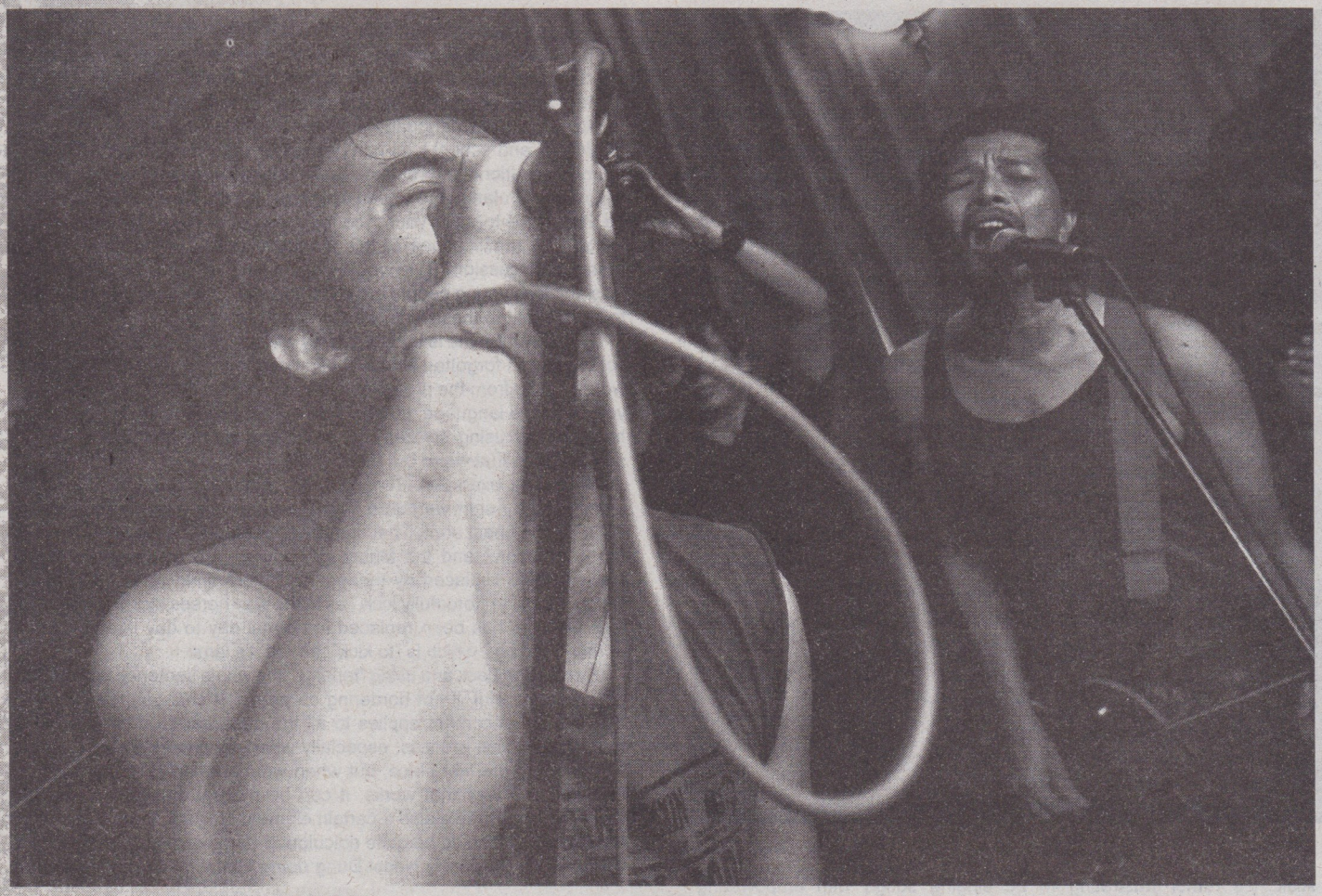
So why do we change to Malay now? Probably because of a recent realization that English as a commonly-used medium has been heavily eroded in this country. English had always been taught as the second language for decades, even before independence, but its usage has been waning of late, especially among the Malay kids. The changes made to the education system where English was downplayed to "uphold" the Malay language, had become a huge problem when most graduates and school kids can't speak or read English as well as the many generations before them, thus making it hard for them to get jobs in this English-language-driven economy! It's the classic case of cutting off your nose to spite your face, courtesy of corrupt Malay chauvinist idiots! The ramifications of this language policy would have its own reams of discussions if we would want to get into it, but the nut of it all is less and less young people are conversant in English, and so if we want to be relevant to these kids, we too need to change.

The fun bit for me is that the Malay we are using in our songs is often sprinkled with forgotten words, those used in the olden times, including words dating from the pre-colonial days. So it's quite a heady mixture, if you know the language, that is. Sometimes it sounds as if we're writing harsh poetry using stylized mix of vintage words and street-slang or something to that weird but familiar effect.

Here's an example: "Terjang Lolos Kandang Durjana" this is the wording to a t-shirt we made with a picture of a water buffalo staring out from the chest area. That sentence means, "Kick away and escape this evil prison," and the Malay words used are all mostly forgotten. Nowadays all replaced by modern and more timid versions. "terjang" which means to "forcefully kick," as in the way horses kick with their hind legs up high, has been replaced in normal day to day usage with the boring "tending," which is "to kick", and that's lame.

By bringing back and using "terjang," the whole sentence immediately becomes forceful, if not bordering on poetic. It changes the dynamics and this enhancement applies to all the other carefully chosen words too. It's a difficult process, especially when my written Malay is not up to scratch in the first place, but when we managed to string them out together in a way that works, it can be more engaging and exciting than English. There's also a certain element of kitsch there which I find amusing, and it could be quite ridiculously bombastic too, which is cool.

Bullet: I love the Malay lyrics! Dung doing Malay made me feel like we



have arrived! They are a hell lot more relevant than the English tunes. We've been listening to others from all over the world singing something relevant to themselves, now it's our time. I hope we can write more of what is happening here that way, continue attempting to make sense of this senseless world by putting it in the local context.

MRR: And speaking of recordings, could you give us a brief discography of Carburetor Dung and tell us about the new releases, as I understand you have a full unreleased LP and are already working on a follow up?

Joe: Roddy, our "discography" is actually very brief. If you wanna only count real proper releases, there's only *two* so far. And that's the first album *Songs For Friends* which came out in late 1993 (on tapes originally, but later on CDs, later available as pirated CDs, too), and then the second release in 1999, something which we called a mini-album with the title *The Allure of Manure*, also on tape (and never re-released on CD). The 7" which came out in the UK back then (*Sheepfarming in Malaysia* EP) actually took four songs from the second release.

Other than that we have been on quite a number of compilations and splits, some on tapes by friends overseas in the early days, also CD-Rs and such locally. Anyway, there's a long list of releases on our site if you're interested. As for the new releases, there are two. First is the split-CD we did with our heroes MDC, along with Tom's old band The Bollocks. It's called *Mabukkuasa* (literally "drunk with power") on Jerk-Off Records and SBS Records.

A few weeks ago our new album in twelve years was released on 10" vinyl in Germany. It's called *Inginku Rejam Raksasa Kejam* (literally meaning "I Wanna Destroy The Wicked Monster"): Corny, a friend of ours in Berlin put that out via his brand new label Fucking Awesome Music Every Day. We are now working on the CD and cassette versions for release on our own label Ricecooker Recordings.

Soon there will be a sixteen bands compilation CD we did to highlight the local scene in 2007, which has never seen the light of day just yet! Dung have a song in there, along with tracks by excellent Malaysian bands such as FSF, Dum Dum Tak, Freygyle, Mindless Show, The Garrison Pusher (Alak's other band), The Pips, In-A-Sense IN-A-SENS and more. This is a project by Alak's label Knot Records and Ricecooker Recordings.

On the follow-up, we do have several new songs which haven't been worked out, but I do believe we should rework a full album of unrecorded songs by our old project band The Shitworkers, and later an album of all acoustic songs. On top of that, there are two compilations coming up by our local friends which we will contribute new songs to, one of which a benefit for the local DIY venue Rumah Api, a crucial part of the local DIY punk scene.

Fendi: Yup, recording The Shitworkers tunes and the collection of Dung acoustic songs are something we are looking forward to. Most of these songs are a lot more open, not too shackled with formulaic punk rock. For me The Shitworkers stuff is a lot more reckless in terms of playing, with more dynamics. Hopefully, with Alak, Bullet and Tom involved, the songs will evolve further.

Manan: I've always had a thing for the first album, *Songs for Friends*. I bought the cassette back then and still have it to this day. Can't wait for the Dung collection of "country" songs though, a reworking of the old tunes in new renditions should be fun!

Bullet: Yes, yes, we have all those plans and they are all very exciting and all these guys will never tell you about our non-DIY secret projects, and they are a hell lot more challenging and punker than punk, with names like Britmey Spears, Bison Beaver and Sipi Norhaliza (yes, again I'm legal savvy!). I'm peeing my pants with excitement!

MRR: Your music to my ears is kind of hard to classify, too melodic to be hardcore, and too charged up to be "just" punk rock, with bands like Quarantine and Motorhead jumping to my lips as comparisons. How would you guys describe yourselves? Who or what have been the main influences of the band sound?

Manan: I'm not sure what the hell it is, but Motorhead? Dang!!! Whatever you are smoking must be damn good...Can I have some? Seriously, I don't really know how to describe what Dung sound like. There are just too many ingredients to the recipe, everyone brings their own influences. Tom is now dangerously bordering on being a widdly-widdly metalhead. That's bothering us, but Joe told me he had given

Tom a stern warning: There shouldn't be no fuckin' Yngwie Malmsteen in Dung, dude!

Joe: Thank you, Roddy. Being compared to Motorhead is really one of the most of important highlights of me being in this band. But, that's bloody bollocks! That's what it is! No fuckin' way... I guess we really need repay you with the best "roti canai" in the land then.

In terms of the evolution of our sound or style, when we started out we didn't know what the fuck we were doing. Me and Fendi couldn't play very well at all, thus we can't play covers, so that forced ourselves to come up with our own songs with our own take on that whole punk thing. At the point when we started writing songs for the first album (*Songs For Friends*) in 1993, we were listening heavily to Fudgetunnel, Godflesh, and all that post-grindcore stuff put out by Earache & Peaceville, so we down-tuned our guitars and installed twin-pedals on the drum-kit to suit, but we were also pop music fans (!), with keen interest in all that English indie-pop groups of the '80s (from Jesus and Mary Chain to The Smiths to The Chameleons). As a result, instead of going heavy or even straight-ahead punk rock, we had punked up indie-pop songs with simple, sing-a-long melodies, a bit like English street-punk meets simplistic indie-pop served with dropped-D guitars and double-pedal drumming. Sounds horrible, doesn't it?

Like I said, we didn't have a clue of what we were doing, worse when we were shoved into the recording studio with no experience and a sound engineer who didn't know jack-shit about punk rock, but at least the results didn't sound like anyone else, but I must add I cringe whenever I hear that first album.

By the time we recorded our second release (*The Allure of Manure*) in 1999, it had evolved (or probably regressed) to normal tuning and straight-ahead, faster, tighter punk, in the vein of Youth Brigade meets Red Alert meets The Instigators, quite UK82-ish, a lot angrier but still keeping most of the melodic stuff from the first album.

Just before Alak joined us in early 2004 and especially after Bullet came in a year later, we wrote slower, ponderous and more percussive songs, influenced by Indonesian folk-singers such as Iwan Fals, Gombloh, and Leo Christie, but we also tempered that rhythmic stuff with some faster and shorter songs, more hardcore-punk than the old sing-a-long street-punk of old.

So we kept changing according to what we feel like doing. There was never a plan to sound like anyone else and there's no point in repeating what we've done before. I believe we sound like different types of foodstuff mixed in and put in a blender with certain acid poured in, the resulting goo is Dung, which is another word for "shit," as in good shit, of course! Hahahah!

Alak: Carburetor Dung have been evolving since the very first time I listened to them. Personally, the early Dung sounded more like modified Jawbreaker. As years went by the band grew angrier with the sound and I sure love being in this current line-up as the music produced right now has matured into its own kind of feel. Even for me, I don't know what band Carburetor Dung can be likened to. It's like whenever there's a new song coming, we'd never expect how it's gonna sound like in the first place, and that allows it to change and shaped as we go.

Fendi: If anyone wants to label it, I would prefer it to be called punk rock. The energy is punk rock. I've been listening to a lot different kinds of stuff these past few years but my favorites are still '80s US/UK/Italian/Japanese punk/HC stuff.

Bullet: Yo! Roddy bro! Stop sniffing the glue laaa (Malaysian slang). Technically speaking, if you have Dung music done properly, played in tune and slowed down, babies could go to sleep listening to it. Honest, that's a fact! Our songs are actually Top 40-standard pop songs being fucked-up with out-of-tune guitars and out-of-sync rhythm section. Most of the chord structures are not even rock'n'roll! (I'm writing this garbage because I can't even make any comparison and my music knowledge stinks). In fact, if you start making babies, Roddy, do order one of our *Dung for Babies* CD-Rs (top seller at the nearest 7-11). Just don't listen to it when driving.

MRR: The record from you guys that I'm most familiar with is the *Sheep Farming in Malaysia* 7", probably because it was released on a UK label back in 1999. How did the 7" come together and how did you manage international communications at this time. How did you make contact with people from outside Malaysia before the internet?

Manan: Smoke signals, snail mails, telegrams, and ahh the occasional Morse codes!

Joe: Back in the early '80s we used to write to people overseas, mainly the Philippines, UK, Poland, Italy & France. It's pen to paper, shoved in recycled envelopes, stuck with glued stamps (to be reused!). Me and friends practically begged for records, tapes and zines from our "punk-pals" overseas then, just because we don't have anything local to trade for.

The writings of Sir Luk Haas for *MRR* those days introduced us to other scenes apart from the readily known ones in the USA and UK. Also we had local friends who went on to study in Australia and they sent us records, tapes of radio shows from there, and also a lot of zines, right from *Search and Destroy* in California to *Linea Diritta* from Italy and so on. And that got me to contact Borderless Countries Tapes and distributed their amazing cassettes here, right from Rattus to Raw Power!

In the mid-'80s, I started my own fanzine (*Aedes*) and that had me writing all over the world doing interviews, from Peru to Finland to South Africa, etc. That's how I got to know Ben Sik-O-War who was doing *Raising Hell* fanzine in the UK in the '80s. By the time he did another zine called *You're So Hideous*, he started to come to Kuala Lumpur almost every year, stayed with us, and hung out for months.

At one point in 1998 or so, he was compensated with quite a bit of money for a police brutality case in London. Once he got that, Ben told me he wanted to put out our 7" and started his own Hideous Records label for it. So, in way, you can say that our 7" was paid for by Her Majesty's City of London Police! We love Ben and we miss him every day. Hope you're well, sir!

Fendi: Hahahaha, letters stuck with glued stamps, that's classic! Yeah, I wrote to "punk-pals" all around the globe in totally broken English. Italy, Denmark, Philippines, UK, France. etc., hoping for a reply from them and sometimes they would take months and a year! But that's OK. It doesn't matter if I had to save my pocket money for the postage, because sometimes I got sent excellent compilation tapes, dubbed on a C60 or a C90, with ugly hand writing on it. Then there were the typewritten/hand-written xeroxed fanzines, and I'll be sitting there happily listening to all these obscure punk rock bands, Kina, Negazione, Raw Power, Rattus, Olho Seco, Colera, etc. Hahahaha. That made me move to Kuala Lumpur, met this guy called Joe Kidd and, what do you know, we'd soon be playing in a band together, and that lasted until now! That is punk rock!!

Bullet: Too young to remember that far, bro. Sorry.

MRR: The last few years have seen a steady flow of DIY bands touring around Southeast Asia. How do you feel about this? I've seen other commentators say that Western bands often come here without offering anything back to the scene, for example, releasing Asian bands in their own countries, and I have also heard others say that many Southeast Asian bands expect too much and are not willing to do any hard work. What are your thoughts on these opinions?

Joe: For almost fifteen years now the local scene has been hosting many overseas DIY punk bands in Kuala Lumpur and its surroundings. It started with the bigger, more well known Fugazi in Kuala Lumpur in 1996, then Warsore (Melbourne, Australia) in 1998 and then Annalise (Leeds, UK), then Container Crusties From Hell (Holland) both in 2000, right to Diskoiraa (Spain) who were here a few months ago, and Cocha Bomba (Lyon, France) which played Rumah Api recently.

In between there were Code 13, Rambo, S.O.L. (Germany), Pack (Switzerland), Vivisick and Fuck On The Beach (Japan), Disarm (Japan), Pisschrist (Australia), Scum System Kill (Australia), Barackca (Hungary), Conquest For Death, Nuclear Death Terror, Never Built Ruins (Germany), C.B.U. (Germany), War All The Time (UK), Vitamin X, MR Sterile Assembly (NZ), etc. Too many to list here, especially if you want to include our friends' bands from Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines, and also other foreign bands of different persuasions (hardcore, post-hardcore, screamo, youth-crew, experimental, folk, etc.), and as far as I can say, me and my immediate circle of friends are very grateful indeed to be able to see these bands play right in our backyards.

As someone who has been and still is involved in hosting the bands here (my house here is known as "the bus station" to our neighbors), I know touring Southeast Asia is not an easy thing to do. The amount of planning, money, and trust involved in making the trip happen can be monumental, especially to those who don't have enough to live day-by-day in the first place. But most of the time all the bands I've asked

after all these tours had said that they enjoyed it. It can be grueling hot and humid with crappy back-line (well, sometimes), but it's worth it, especially due to the crazy kids, the local bands, the places they visited, that food they tasted, that trip taken through this and that shit, etc. It's an experience, and I believe touring is an adventure of the great unknown, the uncertainty and anxiety in a foreign land comes with a package.

On the rather negative "opinions" above, I've only started to hear that quite recently and only at one gig. It baffled me. I do not understand what the problem is. I mean, what do you expect the traveling foreign bands to do, other than keep on playing enjoyable shows all around the region? Some people I talked to said that probably members of the visiting bands could do a talk or workshop on whatever it is that would interest the kids, a discussion of sorts, an exchange of stories or ideas and experiences, from political subjects such as squatting to anti-fascist actions to other lessons which they can impart.

That's a fair enough request, but not all of these bands are prepared to do that, especially on a whim. Some are not even well-versed on such things to begin with, while some bands feature members who would just get freaked out speaking in front of a crowd, unless they are on-stage rocking out that is. Basically, what I'm saying is it's up to the organizers/promoters/booking-kids to enquire if the bands would be OK to do these "extra-curricular activities," when they were planning for the tour. It should not be a pre-requisite though, and it shouldn't be used to judge and bitch about these bands if they can't or won't do it!

On the "forced" reciprocal thing with "we get you to play here, so you'll have to release our stuff there," the audacity to ask for such things is so preposterous that it must be a jest! This is the first time I've heard of this, so excuse me for being skeptical. That's like, "I'll scratch your back only when you'd scratch my back!" They sound like some fucking politicians trying to screw a new constituency! Yes, that would only be normal in the murky world of Southeast Asian political landscape, where personalities vested with power would use it as a bargaining tool for loyalty and servility, they would give crumbs out thus the receivers would then feel so thankful and obliged enough to be at the giver's every bidding. Anyway, I doubt anyone here would say such things. It's crazy!

All that put aside, the work load and all the troubles all these local promoters / organizers / booking-kids go through to spend hard-earned money on planning, hosting, accompanying and ferrying around these foreign bands should *not* be taken lightly. They are doing all these things out of *love*, so they deserve to be *loved* back, or at least treated with respect for what they did. I don't want to name names, but not all of the bands who came here are that mindful of the work done to host their tours, and such behavior is just unbecoming in a scene such as ours. I believe that's where these strange "requests" festered from, the feeling of being "used" and then discarded as the bands went off somewhere else. Wham, bam, thank you, ma'am.

Alak: Nowadays it's like once a month there'll be some foreign touring bands coming over. Compared to years before, whenever there's a gig with a touring band, it'll be the gig with the most crowd, doesn't matter whether the band is famous or not.

For me, the "not offering anything back" issue here should not be taken literally. Some kids here grumbled as such because of "some" foreign bands (not all), who didn't seem to appreciate what some gig organizers went through to set-up the shows and tours. There were several members of foreign bands who would be cocky or arrogant and look down at the locals. I understand how tiring touring is, but throwing a smile would be ample enough.

"Many South East Asian bands expect too much and are not willing to do any hard work." This is surely for me a harsh accusation. I've known bands here with members who do two or three jobs a day just to release 200 copies of cassettes. The cost of recording and production here is quite expensive compared to the West and even postage to the Western countries are far too expensive. And looking at the huge differences in currencies, most distros/labels here strive hard to get their releases abroad just to widen the distribution. And surely all these distros/labels owners don't do this for a living, they all still need to have a regular job in order to sustain their DIY projects.

Manan: That's typical stereotyping! WTF?! Anywhere on this fucking planet, it is the fucking same. I shall leave it at that.

Bullet: Rockstar syndrome, meh? This is DIY man! Let's keep it that way. It is already so damn hard to organize and play a show without losing money here, let alone organizing gigs for foreign bands playing under the radar, rocking without the proper permits needed, but the kids are doing it anyway, with no hesitation, even when nobody knows these bands in the first place, even when them gangstas-in-blue could come knocking at any time! Respect is due!

MRR: I know that Carburetor Dung would like to tour in Europe in the future. How feasible do you think this is? Have many Malaysian bands toured Europe? Can you give us an idea of the obstacles that there are before a DIY band from a Third World can organize an international tour?

Manan: *Money* and *time*. There's a mountain of obstacles. But we did Indonesia and the Philippines fine (with a few battle scars to prove it), after some careful and early planning that is. Europe will be next, but that place is so fucking expensive...ain't that a bitch... but that's the next destination and hopefully with the help of the band's own little business venture, The Kerbau (a post-production, sound recording and design studio we are building now), whether by land, sea, air or maybe catapulting ourselves over or maybe on camel back we will get there. You just fucking wait!

Joe: Yes, money and time, and also our very own level of confidence. We've been invited by friends there for many years, but we never felt that comfy in terms of both our music and our finances to really plan for it. But things are changing. We are ready to go now. There have been a few bands from here that have gone off to Europe and played a bunch of shows in a few countries there, and there's also our friends' band Kontrasosial from Indonesia who had quite a time there last year. We also just heard Tools Of The Trade will be heading there later this year, so if they can do it...

In terms of "obstacles," I believe they are the same for any other bands going into Europe, money and time (as mentioned) and the logistics of it all. We'd need a bunch of good friends there to help out, a solid planning would be able to pull it off, I'm sure. What we need to be sure about is how long should we do it (Two weeks? A month?), when is

the best period to go, where we gonna start (so we can plan the routes), how much money would we need (so we can work for it), etc.

One thing which would be my wish if we'd ever tour Europe, is to not play every single day we're there. It would be great to spend a day off at each town we visit and see these places, meet people, hang out. That would be a dream. I've seen tour schedules which were punishing, unrelenting, and sometimes I wonder why bother, that is, unless you're under some big label's contract which requires you to perform every day.

Alak: The only obstacle I could see is money. Europe is fuckin' expensive, so we would need four or five times more money than what we had to tour Java. But I'm sure we can sort that out when the time comes...rob a bank or something.

Bullet: Third World, huh? OK, it would be difficult to tour the First World countries due to, yes, time and money but also there's the immigration issue. I remember B-Boy Lilou wearing a t-shirt with the caption "I'M A MUSLIM, DON'T PANIC!" Yes! I think that is relevant, depending from which port of entry we are looking at. Malaysia is categorized as "F9" or "unfriendly" in the US foreign policies charter, and over there we would be against the wall, naked with a probe up our arses.

A couple of Malaysian bands were deported on their arrival in Australia a few years ago (and that could happen in EU too!). But with proper collaboration and planning between both the receiving country's DIY organizers and the Third World country punks (see? I'm about to get pissed again!), things could be smooth and fun, and hopefully we could come back after all that with a smile instead of a scar.

MRR: My own tour through Southeast Asia with Atomgevitter was a roller coaster ride of chaos chockfull of wild gigs and adventures so as veterans of the scene would you like to share some of your own favorite battle stories with us? Any good stories about you shitting your pants on the road?

Fendi: *Funnnn*! There were times where I would find myself trying to help Bullet stop his bass drum from moving around in a middle of a song, while trying to play the bass at the same time and trying hard to hear what the bloody hell Alak, Joe and Tom were playing, "Are we playing the same song in first place?" Hauhahaha! Also feeling totally overwhelmed and inspired when I saw the Indonesian street punks taking care of each other and taking care of us when we were there. There's also that time where, fucking hell, we were meeting up with Al Dimalanta from the mighty Dead Ends! And not to forget the "Delusion of Terror " home cooking style by Emman's every ready cooks.

Fucking hellll! We are not fuckin' Bad Religion or NOFX. We know we are not gonna get a nice five-star hotels and top-notch backline and stage crews and funky automated lights'n'sound or whatever *bullshit* those bands' "managers" are always asking for. Deal with it! Huahahaha! We gonna just keep sleeping on people's floors/cheap motels and have some *funnnn*!

Joe: The constant would be excellent small shows, very intimate and loud with sound equipment (the back line and PAs) which were in totally bad shape, drum sets in danger of disintegrating, microphones which would give you electro-shock therapy, etc. It's always fun though, with kids singing along and the microphones going missing in the tangle of bodies. We've been playing since 1993 and never had problems we can't live with. There have been shows stopped by a police raid, where they would round up the kids and do urine tests (positive results would have you detained under remand for two weeks, and repeat offenders would be sent to drug rehabs for two years!).

There are many memorable ones and also the absurd one where kids were lining up asking for autographs from us at a show in 1996 at a primary school hall in Kuala Terengganu. Once at a show in Kuantan, the club owner introduced us to the beer storage room hours before we played, thus the resulting show a total chaos, with Fendi playing his bass lying down, horizontal throughout the set.

At a death and black metal show in Seremban (near Tampin, where Atomgevitter played) in the mid-'90s, we were in the audience, cheering our "dark, evil and satanic" corpse-painted friends, seeing that all of the Dung were there, the organizer invited us to close the show with a short set, and so we did, with Fendi borrowing a brand new white enameled bass and proceeded to play without a pick. By the end of our set his fingers and the guitar were all bloodied and gory, thus we were a lot more "evil" than the black-metalheads themselves!

Once we played in a small town called Segamat in the south, and skinheads from the nearby government-run plantation settlements, came to the show, checked us out, decided we're cool and started plying us with cheap whisky, regaling us with tales of violence and fighting as if we're interested in all that waste of energy, the night ended with a splendorous dinner, huge spread prepared by the organizer's mom at their house, lots and lots of fish!!

When we went down to JB for the first time, not to play but just following a friend's band, four guys (two skinheads and two chaos punks) surrounded me with sticks and studded belts in hand. This is because I did a bad review of one of the local band's albums, branding it nationalistic and racist in nature. The rest of Dung were in the van arming themselves with what they can gather, one of them had the fire extinguisher! But I managed to talk sense to these potential wife-beaters and went off unharmed. Whew!

Then there's also that crazy and utterly fun show we did in Pondok Cabe, Tangerang, near Jakarta, a punk fest with 30 bands to fund the circumcisions of boys coming of age from poor families (don't ask!). As I mentioned before, there were around 2000 punks in full regalia, mohawks, boots, leathers, the works. We played four songs, one of which featured this punk lying down and shaking super epileptic at my feet, getting me really worried, until two bouncers (also full-geared punks) came in and forcefully shoved the guy to fall eight feet down to the ground below. You can't imagine our horrors! But the guy stood up, dusted himself off and started pogoing as nothing happened! Damn! We love them crazy Indonesian friends! They are *mad*!

The scariest incident would be the one mentioned by Bullet above, the huge 2008 rally against the fuel hike, organized by the opposition parties bloc. It was in a stadium with thousands of people, supporters of the opposition, NGOs and pretty much anti-government partisans. We played the last song, "Mari Nyanyi Menjilat" (Lets Sing Licking), our song about how the government, corporate entities, etc. entice the citizens and bands to a better life as long as they drop their self-worth and lick the arses of the people in power. This song always feature Alak singing while mooning the crowd, at this show though he was just gesturing, by turning his back to the crowd and pulling his pants down to show three inches of his boxer shorts.

All hell broke loose, the crowd in front of us invaded the stage with murderous intent, kicking the equipment and threatened to beat us up! There were hundreds of them. Lucky we were protected by the security people, who dragged us out of the chaos to a corner and formed a ring around us. The siege went on for a long time, with some people stealing kicks through the cordon of security people, yelling abuse and all that. Outside of the stadium there were more people with sticks and whatever they find, ready for a lynching. Hell, some of the security people were also furious with us!

The incident was front-page news for days afterwards, both on TV and newspapers. We felt like The Sex Pistols in the aftermath of that Bill Grundy show. What happened became a national scandal and the talk of the whole nation, with discussions happening everywhere. We got death-threats on our phones, and surprisingly a supportive article from the vice president of the huge Islamic party, of all people. Crazy shit, I'm still quite traumatized by it all but none of us shit our pants though.

Manan: Well, you're wrong Joe! I pooped my pants!

Alak: Looking at the thousands of fanatical conservative, religious opposition party supporters swarming like murderous zombies coming at us would absolutely make me shit my pants that time, but I'm glad I didn't. There was a period after the incident where I was all traumatized but today, looking back on what had happened, I'd laugh about it. Just imagine, the next week after the incident we were at the police station being grilled for "indecent exposure" and the one thing they confiscated was my RM5 blue boxer pants with a tag "Feel Free" on it, held as evidence of the dirty deed!

The incident somehow brought the whole nation into various discussions about how open would the people be towards counter culture, the importance of freedom of speech and such. There were long dialogues among the punks here, which somehow proved that even in the scene itself there are pockets of conservatism and chicken-shit conformists. It clearly revealed the identities of some "punks" who are extremely conventional and reactionary with lots of moral policing on the sides.

Bullet: During the 2008 Java tour, we took a train from Jogjakarta to Jakarta, a wonderfully stressful eight hour trip sitting in a hurtling oven. While we were romanticizing the beauty of the Indonesian rice fields and its countryside, a bunch of bored kids pelted our train and hit Joe's head! And it was a moving train! Luckily there was no serious injuries.

The worst is when we were in Johor Bahru to play one of those dreaded fests, where a million bands take turns on stage. We arrived there early and had to wait just like everybody else, hell yeah! No problem, we can wait for our turn. But it turned out to be a ten hour wait! Time spent sleeping and waking up and sleeping again! That was the longest wait ever! Some of us ended up sleeping in a cabana, yes, a cabana, with our saliva drooling all over the wooden floor, real deep deep sleep with the sun right on top of our heads, while all these metal and Oi! bands were on stage cranking and screaming their heads off!

Also in Manila last year, at the B-Sides Bar show, again we slept and woke up and slept again before we can actually play (which was way after midnight). Somehow we were always put to play at the very end of a show, always! But now Joe always makes sure we play early so we can enjoy other bands playing.

For me the most memorable show was at the Blackhole's final series of gigs, in Singapore. Someone did a horizontal head dive, like a drunken torpedo, and he torpedoed my drums, sending it all flying!! I was so worried the metal parts would end up stuck in the head of this big torpedo boy! Everyone was laughing after the show, but during the brief but explosive commotion Manan was busy helping the big torpedo boy get back on his feet, and trust me it was not easy, the guy was bleeding. Yarrggh, it's like total Black Metal!

MRR: What has been the golden age for DIY music in Southeast Asia?

Joe: In Malaysia, it began in 1996 when our guitarist Tom's old band The Bollocks put out their *Revolution* tape which was recorded cheaply, and then sold the cassette very, very cheap! That's the beginning of a true DIY era in the local scene.

As for it being the "golden era," I'd believe what we are experiencing from about ten years ago till now is the golden era of the Malaysian DIY scene. The golden era is *now*! I believe it's the same in Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. For the last decade or so, the SEA scene featured so many great bands, lots of cool DIY-run venues, and tons of labels/distros, along with several inspiring collectives, all of that constitutes a golden era for me.

Prior to that, the Malaysian "underground" music scene had a great time from about 1992 to around 1997, a five year run of bands who didn't sound like any other bands overseas, countless fanzines, and huge gigs with thousands of people. In the Philippines, I must say my favorite era was the early '80s, when bands such as Dead Ends, IOV, Philippine Violators, etc. appeared on the *Twisted Red Cross* cassettes. That's an awesome time, with a lot of great zines and people involved. That's not to say that nothing is happening there now, in fact, just like everywhere else in the region, they have many, many awesome bands, labels/distros, etc.

As for Indonesia, for the past ten years it has been a great destination for traveling bands, great crowds, very good people and generally excellent good fun for everyone, and the bands there usually trump what we have here!

Alak: I agree that starting from the mid '90s the scene has been blooming great, but I still think that today and a couple years back things got even better. However, some veteran kids here who were there earlier somehow would get bitter and never accepted nor support the new scene nowadays, and I'm sure they have been missing a lot of great bands, gigs, recordings and excellent times. Their loss, I guess. The other disappointing thing is a lot of what's happening now is just constant bursts of quantity, rather than quality.

MRR: Ok lads to finish up let's talk about a t-shirt you released recently with the slogan "Too Old To Give Up The Mohawk!" You obviously think you've crossed a line of no turning back. What was that line to each of you, and if you had the chance again would you still cross it?

Joe: "Too Old To Give Up The Mohawk!" is our battle cry, a statement of intent to be who we are, take it or leave it. We have two songs dealing with this "line," so that probably means it's a constant concern. Truth is the "line" is always there. We have crossed it many, many times and will continue doing so when it's blocking our path. The "line" can be of many factors and personally, it can be that point when jadedness creeps in or when others things in life take precedent.

I'm gonna be 48 later this year, and I really want to start concentrating

on my other interests and ambitions, and these things can be the "line" which would stop me being active in the band, but I love the band, the scene, and what we do within that, so I'll need to find ways which would enable me to keep on doing this and also have my other interests actively pursued.

Fendi and Bullet both have children, with Bullet topping the list with six kids, so they are in a difficult corner when it comes to juggling the family, work, and Dung, but I see no indication from them that they would ever stop playing and being active. The studio space we are building, The Kerbau, will be our outlet for both Dung and other creative things we wanna do. One of them is working on films and documentaries about topics which we are interested in, so there are efforts from all of us to further our interest as the same unit without losing the band in the process. So fuck the line, erase the fucker!

Fendi: Lines? Nowadays we would really like to cross international lines! Hahahha! I guess for me, I've crossed the line when I first fell in love with punk rock, and I can't think of how or why I would stop doing all this stuff. Even if I don't play in a band that doesn't mean that I'm quitting. There are way too many things happening around me that are keeping me inspired. Punk rock opens up a lot of channels for me to express my feelings, even outside of the scene. But it could be too much for me if Joe starts to wank his guitar ala Scorpions or Guns'n'Roses. That would be the final straw!

Manan: We've been crossing the lines all the time, and we ain't going to a change a damn thing.

Alak: There is that "line," but further understanding of what punk really means to me has blurred the perimeters somehow. It's empowering me to go forth and experience beyond the limits we usually put ourselves in, while keeping my sensibility in check, of course.

Bullet: The day I can't lift a finger due to arthritis or when my brain can't remember how to pee will be the day I cross the final line. And this would only happen if I did not invent a portable memory machine of my youth or drumming by wires (like the jet-plane), to drum just by thinking (Capt. Jack Sparrow, I still need my fountain of youth!! Darn it!).

No. seriously, we are Asians with Asian values so we will always be dealing with people who wouldn't understand our lack of economic sensibility in what we do as a band. People ask us, "Hampa tak dapat duit ka main muzik ni?" (translated, "So you guys don't make money from playing this music meh?"). Such is the world we live in, so to play in a DIY punk rock band in that sort of environment is like crossing all the lines that are out there! They would go, "Hishhh! Lagu setan ni, pi cuci kote!" (translated, "Hissh! That's devil's music, go and clean your penis!"). Well, no one would actually say that but you get my drift.

So it's not about crossing a line and conforming to rebelliousness, youth hate parents shit, you capitalist pig, but to *not* recognize there are lines, that is what I subscribe to, and I believe we all do. For me "Too Old To Give Up The Mohawk!" is not about crossing the line, but during our younger days (I'm not saying that we are old! hehe!), in a moment of clarity, I knew what I wanted to do and I can never turn back to the old ways again.

MRR: Actually, one more question guys – this is for *Ploppy Pants* zine, so won't you tell us all a good story about shitting in your pants?

Manan: Stuck in a massive Kuala Lumpur traffic jam one day, and it had to happen in a heavy downpour on a Friday. Just had the best chicken curry for lunch, along with plenty of other gunpowder-like dishes. Been holding back the urge, and it swells, tornado twistin' and it bursts! Total gore-grind, Martha Splatter-poo in the car!

Joe: I was thirteen, the bus was packed, standing room only. I hung on to the ceiling railings, the bus swayed and shook as it stopped and started along the way, constantly picking up and dropping off strangers. Halfway through, my stomach acted up, damned bubbling bubbles and prickly twisting innards. Tormented, I breathed deep and held in the farts, Zen-style, but as the bus nears my hometown, the devil's goo slipped through, dripping down my leg, wetting the green school trousers. People turned around looking for the source of the heavy stench. I did the same, scanning the faces, looking for the guilty party.

As the drip hits my shoes, a deeper breath taken and I rang the stop button - acting normal, nonchalant, cool. The bus juddered to a violent halt, prompting more shit dripping round my ankles. I made my way calmly through the people, cold sweat forming, my composure melting

with each step taken. As I reached the door, I knew I was losing the battle. It's futile and so be it, muthafuckers! Caution thrown to the winds, I jumped down onto the curb and sprinted to the nearest field of bushes, the bus erupted in laughter. I ran until I hit the patch, and as I dived into the nearest bush, the full force of oppressed shit exploded around my arse, one single, forceful wet blast - kablooeey!! That's bettah!

Alak: Every day when I was twelve I had to cycle to school which was five kilometers away from my house. There was this one day I had this terrible stomach ache and I just couldn't stand running back and forth to the school's toilet. So I decided to just drop class and cycle back home. It was a long and challenging journey. All the way, the shit was on free-flow and i was sloshing in it for 45 minutes non-stop.

Bullet: I was fifteen years of age. It was during a prep class at night. A very quiet night, where the ceiling fans were slowly turning. Suddenly a loud, wet fart echoed through the room, followed by a gurgling bubbling long tuneable sound and a heavy bouquet of ammonia-like smell with a trace of fruitish ester covers the room. No one moved or made a sound. I stood up, made my way to the front of the class. A ruler in my hand and I rapped it on the table, "Perhatian! Perhatian!," with the silence broken, all the fellow students lifted their heads from the books (yes, we were geeks). "Perhatian! Perhatian!!! Hasniza ciritttttttt!!!" (translated, "Attention! Attention! Hasniza pooped her pants") while pointing my finger at one of the girls, everyone burst out laughing madly and the girl, the poor girl, turned red, cried and ran out.

She is now a lawyer or some hotshot lady, while I play in a punk band. I'm sorry Hasniza. It was all about survival of the fittest then. Here's a Dung t-shirt for all the troubles I have caused you, OK?

note: Fendi is a bit sensitive when it comes to matters of the number 1, so he's keeping mum.

MRR: Cool! Any last insults, get them down here!

Joe: Thank you, Roddy, it was great meeting you and seeing Atomgevitter play. Really do wish we've had more time shooting the breeze with a pint or four. If Hollywood would want to do a punk rock remake of Saturday Night Fever, I'll make sure they'd call you in as Danny Zuko.

A humongous, "Brayok mok mung!" ("Your mother's cunt!" a curse, common in the East Coast) to that guy who told you I'm a lazy sod (even if it's true!). We are looking forward to visit you lot in Europe soon, if and when we can make it. Terima kasih banyak-banyak, boss!

Fendi: To all the bands out there, Fugazi made it to Malaysia for a fuckin' cheap and memorable DIY show back in '96, so why can't your band do the same? No lame excuses! Just come over and tour Southeast Asia, you fuckheads!!

Manan: Bring it on, you motherfuckers!!

Alak: You're such a good cunt, Roddy! Norr misses you. Hahaha.

Bullet: Kepada semua berok berok mak yeh yang dok ada diatas kerusi berwajib, buat la kerja hampa baik baik, ingat la yang budak pompuan yg hampa toron semalam tu mungkin anak hampa juga, ingat kat orang orang miskin, papa kedana bila hampa dok enjoy sakan duit rakyat, menate berok! (translated, "To all the monkeys with scabies sitting on the seats of authority, please do your job properly, do realize that the teenager you've had intercourse with last night could be your very own child, do think of the poor and destitute as you enjoy the money plundered from your people, you scum!").

And to you Roddy, many thanks my man. See you in Europe!

CARBURETOR DUNG (aka DUNG) is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. They can be contacted at therealcarburetordung@gmail.com, you can visit them at their site: http://carburetordung.kerbau.com The new album *Inginku Rejam Raksasa Kejam* is available on 10" vinyl of three different colors from Berlin, just write to order@famed-rec.de. The CD and tape version is available via the band themselves.

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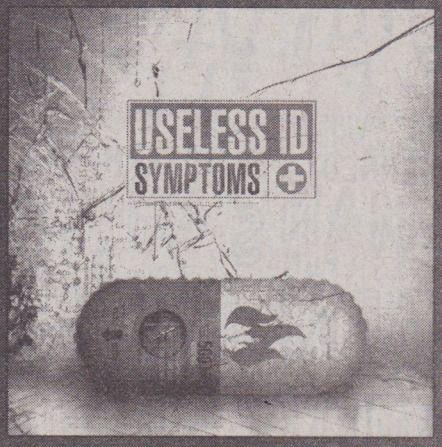

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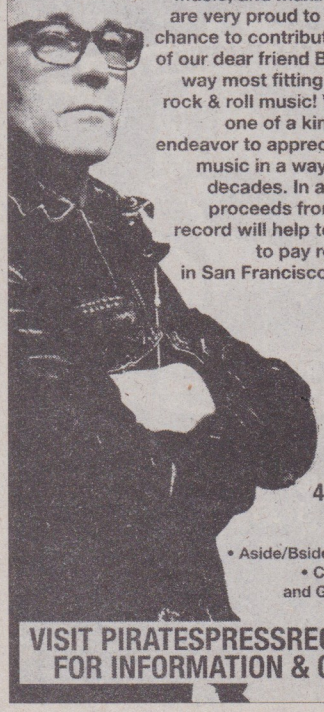

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Interview by Aaron Cometbus

MRR: You can tell this is the East Coast and not Berkeley because you can have a tape recorder out in a public place without everybody freaking out on you.
COINTELPRO?

MRR: Yeah, totally. Let's start with where we are and who we are.
I'm Colin "the Slice Harvester" Hagendorf. We're at Ben's Best Delicatessen, in Rego Park Queens, my favorite delicatessen in all of New York City, eating some knishes and pastrami sandwiches, drinking some coffee, and talking about a zine about pizza.

MRR: First of all, where are you from?
I'm from New Rochelle, NY, a suburb of New York City five or ten miles north of the Bronx. Or to quote the semi-famous conscious rap group, Brand Nubian, "straight outta Now Rule." I grew up in the New York punk scene, I guess. I came to the city every weekend...

MRR: *Which* New York punk scene?
Oh! The New York street punk scene of the late '90s and the New York peace punk scene of the late '90s. There was a nice juxtaposition of going to see Blanks 77 at Coney Island High on a Saturday night, having just seen Anti-Product at ABC No Rio that afternoon.

I grew up in the suburbs. My parents are both from the boroughs, Brooklyn and Queens. Neither one of them would say they were from New York City because to them, growing up in the outer boroughs in the '60s and '70s, "The City" was just Manhattan. My grandmother was still living in Queens until she passed away a few years ago, which is why we're at Ben's Best. My mother and I used to take her out to eat here all the time.

MRR: And when did you start doing fanzines?
When I was fourteen years old, I did a zine called *Atrophy Zine*. It was like any one of those goofy scene report/"funny article" zines that I think many adolescents in the mid-to-late '90s put together, at least around where I was.

I mostly felt this intense and urgent impulse to contribute something to the scene. I wasn't quite sure what "the scene" was yet, but I knew that I needed to be part of it, and that it couldn't be as just a spectator or a consumer. In order to be a valid and viable part of this community that I had found, but didn't feel a part of, I had to contribute something. I didn't think I could be in a band for some reason, so I started doing zines.

I talk to friends of mine about their early fanzines, and they're like, "You still have the first issue of *Life Is Trying*? I only made 30 copies of that." The first issue of *Atrophy Zine*, I made 200 copies right off the bat and I tried to sell them to people outside of the A&P in New Rochelle. No one wanted them.

MRR: You were always a little more ambitious than your peers.
And a little less...

MRR: A little less shy.
Yeah. It wasn't ambition necessarily. I feel like doing the zine at all was the ambition, but once it was done I felt like, "Well now everybody has this obligation to read this thing that I made."

MRR: Is *Slice Harvester* so different from a magazine of scene reports and funny articles?
No, not really. The thing is, I'm not a very capable record reviewer, I'm not a very capable reviewer of shows, but I tried to do both of those things, because I thought, "this is what goes in a zine." Eventually I aspired to have some columns. I solicited advertisements from whomever, and I thought that's what a zine was supposed to be.

But all of the response to the zine...it wasn't like, "Oh that was a very insightful review you had of the Death Penis 7":"

MRR: (Laughs)
That was a real 7"! I've been looking for it. They had a song called "Smurf Up My Butt." They mailed me three copies. I gave two of them away and lost the third. If anyone wants to mail me a copy I'll name my next pet after you.

Anyway, people weren't like, "Oh I really felt like I was sitting in my house listening to Death Penis when I read that stunning review." All that resonated with people was, "I like how in that Fishbone show review, you didn't talk about Fishbone for more than a few sentences, but you did talk about your friend Juan smashing the toilet at CBGB's with a sledge hammer because he was mad you got kicked out of the show for drinking." And that was really what I felt compelled to write about, anyway.

Similarly, I've got this pizza project, where I've eaten at and reviewed almost every pizzeria on the island of Manhattan, but what's really resonated with people, what people have really responded to has been, "me and my friend Aaron are going to eat this pizza and here's a little anecdote about him." Or "here's a story about my friend Caroline." That's what people tend to like, but also what I've gotten the most out of writing. More so than, "this pizza tastes like sucking God's dick" or whatever I say about pizza.

MRR: To back it up for a second, explain to the readers what *Slice Harvester* is, what your mission is, why you took it on, and how you possibly came to live to regret that decision.
Slice Harvester is this project in which I decided to eat a slice of pizza, initially at every pizza parlor in all five boroughs of New York City, and about halfway through Manhattan, a year and a half into it, I decided I would just end it at Manhattan.

When I was first starting, my friend Milo, my best friend since I was thirteen, said to me, "Well how long do you think it'll take to eat all this pizza?" and I said, "I dunno, about seven years." We were double riding a bike down a rainy hill and almost careened into traffic and he screamed, "*You could become a doctor in that amount of time!*" and I said, "Yeah but I don't wanna be a doctor, I wanna eat all this pizza."

MRR: Was it always planned to be a fanzine?
Absolutely.

MRR: Had you stopped doing fanzines for a while? Was it a way of returning to fanzines?
That was probably the biggest motivation for doing this project. That I'd have something fun to make a worthwhile zine out of. I first did zines as a very happy-go-lucky and idealistic young guy, and I loved it, and it was so fun, but after a while I started to say, "What's the point of this? What am I offering people? Why am I spending all this time and energy photocopying my diary, essentially? I don't even

care about this, why should anybody else?"

And I'm not saying people shouldn't publish fanzines. I think people should photocopy their diary, ad infinitum, forever. I just felt like I needed to up the stakes a little bit. I felt like I had done these kind of formless zines for a long time, and that was no longer compelling to me. So through Slice Harvester I created this more rigid form to fit into so that I could become reinvigorated and interested in the medium and in writing in general.

MRR: I don't know if you've figured out after two and a half years what the point of all of this was, if the point is pizza, if the point is New York, trying to uphold the things you love about it, defend the things you feel are under attack, or if you're trying to capture the spirit of the times...

For me, it's kind of like an *Ethics of Ambiguity* thing, that Simone De Beauvoir book where she's building on the *Myth of Sisyphus*. There is no point, really. But the fact that I can take this thing that ultimately doesn't serve any incredibly magnificent purpose and instill it with this meaning that I've ascribed to it and say, "this is important to me and I'm gonna do it like it's important and I'm gonna treat it like it's important."

I think I fell into a kind of gross nihilism in my mid-'20s where I was like, "Nothing is really that meaningful, the things that I've invested all my time and energy in seem to be falling apart around me, people I know seem to be dying in droves, how do I keep getting up in the morning?"

And I had to trick myself for a while and say, "Okay pizza! This pizza project. That's why I get up in the morning." Selfishly, what this did for me was, it reminded me why it's worth it to be alive. And I know that might sound lofty for a fanzine, but it really was this incredibly meaningful thing for me.

MRR: It seems like it was meaningful partly because it resonated with other people, that other people found it exciting, so it was not just some self-imposed, obsessive-compulsive plan.

Colin: Yeah, you're right. That was also necessary for me to feel good about the project, that it would be successful in some arbitrary way. But successful in *my* arbitrary way. I looked at my analytics and 250,000 people have seen my website. Okay, that's really cool, but like, Tobi Vail told me she liked my fanzine. *That's* the success that I was looking for. The other stuff was kind of incidental. I appreciate it and I don't want to sound ungrateful that all these people have responded to this thing I've done, but that's not the success I was trying to achieve.

What's important to me is that I did achieve that kind of success that I was trying for. People I've admired since I was a teenager have said to me, "Hey, nice job."

MRR: Plus you have the framed review on the wall at Pizza Suprema.

And at Carmine's Original! I made a list of goals when I was fifteen that was totally ridiculous. I wanted to have my childhood home turned into a historic landmark, I wanted to be on a stamp before I died, I wanted to have a way to cook eggs named after me, and I wanted to have my picture be one of those ubiquitous framed pictures on the wall at pizzerias. Like Giuliani or Steven Seagal. Rudy Giuliani, Steven Seagal, Colin Hagendorf.

MRR: The reason bands give for signing to a major label is that they're somehow going to reach "the everyman," the other people who aren't punks. But *Slice Harvester*, without discussing punk explicitly, you're using a punk format, punk economics—it's cheap and looks cool and crappy and friendly—but it also works for other people and they respond to it. Obviously they're also responding to the blog and the press you get, but I think without that fanzine no one would've cared quite the same way. And part of the obsessive fan "we don't give a fuck" attitude definitely came from what you grew up with. It's like, an actual successful crossover endeavor, without compromise.

I don't feel like I've compromised at all. At one point *Vice* magazine expressed interest in syndicating *Slice Harvester*. And they were gonna pay me. That's dangling a pretty big carrot in front of my face, but I didn't have to think too hard to say no. The idea of having what I'm doing underneath this...I don't care if it had been the *New Yorker* or *Mother Jones* or something *not* vile. I don't think I would've felt comfortable handing over any of the reins of this project.

MRR: You were a little cagey when I was trying to hone in on what the point of *Slice Harvester* might be, so we won't look at exactly what the point is. But it does seem to me that with the pizzerias, part of it is aesthetics, but part of it is also ethics. You know, with each one you're talking about the way the pizza tastes, but it seems, particularly with pizzerias, that it's about the legitimacy, the genuineness of it. And I think that's why people are so proud if you like their pizza. Bodegas don't care if they're "legitimate bodegas."

Yeah, there's no need for authenticity with a bodega. I think something that a lot of New York cultures share with punk as a culture is this real intense valorization of authenticity as being incredibly important. One of the places I include in my top five list, whenever I'm asked, is this place Pizza Palace on Dykeman Ave in Inwood. And it's not anywhere near one of the five best slices of pizza I've had, but that pizzeria is the perfect pizzeria. The actual space itself, the role it seems to play in the neighborhood. Everything about it is so incredibly ideal. And the thing that pizzerias have in common with fanzines is that the pizzerias that create a successful result are usually the product of one obsessive person.

MRR: Did you get any threats from bad reviews?
I haven't yet. Honestly, that's one of the reasons I didn't want to do pizza in Brooklyn. There're two pizza shops in my neighborhood where they would know who I was. One of them, they serve a great slice, but the guy is a creep to women and he's a racist and I don't eat pizza there anymore even though it's the best pizza in my neighborhood because the guy is such a shithead and I don't want to give him money. He's also definitely "connected" and a terrifying man. I couldn't in good conscience write a review of that place and not mention those things, but I also was scared to. The other place right by my house, they serve a terrible slice, and it's full of cops all the time, and it's awful, and I was afraid to review that slice badly because it's down the street from where I live. I was honestly scared I'd get beat up by the mob or the cops.

MRR: Which leads to the Brooklyn vs. Manhattan debate. Not that we need to make any overarching judgment, but is pizza more historically a Brooklyn thing?
What do I know from historically?

MRR: Is it even American? Did you wrestle with how much pizza as we know it is a New York creation?
Well, pizza as I know it is entirely a New York creation. They wrote this article about me in the *Daily News* when I first started, and it got translated into Italian and published in a couple of Italian newspapers. And for a week I got a dozen emails in broken English or in Italian every day, from angry Sicilians and Neapolitans. "How dare you even call this crap in New York pizza? If you wanna know about pizza you should come to Italy where the pizza is real pizza." A New York slice is distinctly a different food.

MRR: It seemed like earlier on in the magazine you were more on your own, then you started to include more friends, family, visiting friends, and touring bands. There started to be a side story or subtext that was about your community, how you knew all these different people. I don't know if that was just because you were so busy eating pizza, it was the only time you'd ever see your friends, or if it was an excuse to include and showcase them.

From the very beginning *Slice Harvester* was supposed to be about camaraderie and companionship. The first time I went out eating pizza, I was supposed to meet Sweet Tooth. But Tooth lost his glasses at Rockaway Beach and then there was a fire in the train tunnel, all these awful things happened and he ended up not finding me until the second to last slice. So if at the beginning it seemed solitary, that was by accident. I actually only deliberately went out eating pizza alone once. I only ate at eight or nine of the almost 400 by myself.

I think part of it was that I had started trying to quit drinking about halfway through the project. One of the really hard parts was learning how to socialize and spend time with my friends without booze. Forget going to a show! You know, Snuggle comes to town and I take Robert to a cool pier and we drink 40s. That's how you hang out with your friends. At this point I wasn't trying to quit drinking forever, but I did feel like all of my social interactions were intertwined with drinking and I wanted to create some space between the two, so that there could be an option for me to live without drinking if I wanted to.

And *Slice Harvester*, I had already started it, and it turned into this thing where it was like…touring friends would come to town, and I wouldn't want to go to their show because I didn't want to drink. I was afraid to be at a show and not drink, but I still wanted to see them. So I invited them to come eat pizza with me. It was really about crafting these ways of interacting and hanging out without booze.

MRR: What about missed opportunities of people you wanted to eat pizza with?
Some people I didn't even try for. Like, I wanted to get Ed Sanders or Tuli from the Fugs to come eat pizza with me, and I didn't even try for it, and that was so stupid. There's this lineage of weird, politically engaged, Jewish male artists who I feel like I've taken up the mantle of. Like, maybe it starts with Lenny Bruce, travels to the Fugs, crosses the country and lands on you in the Bay. I do feel like there's this history that I'm trying to uphold and I don't even know if it's real.

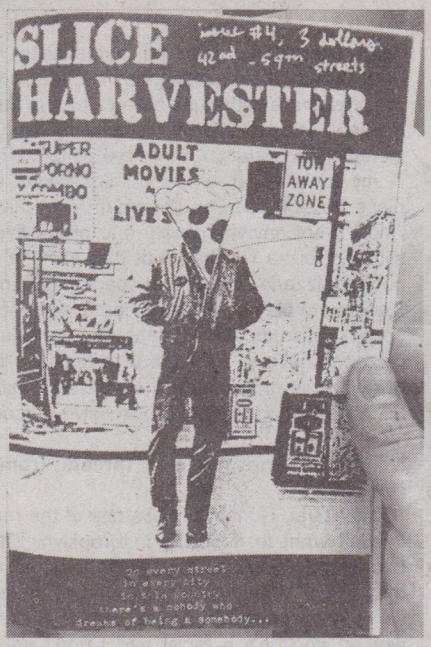
MRR: Oh, it's real.
So yeah, getting Ed Sanders to eat pizza with me would've been a real coup.

MRR: I told you I ran into him at B&H?
No, that's awesome. I just recently wrote him a letter asking him to be my friend. "I said, hey Ed Sanders, my name is Colin. I'd really like you to be my friend. You don't have to do anything, but it would be nice if from now on instead of saying 'Ed Sanders from the Fugs' I could say 'my friend Ed Sanders from the Fugs' and I'd like your permission to do that."

MRR: I know you tried to get Samuel Delany...
Yeah! Sam Delany! He is probably the preeminent historian of cruising culture in New York City and also my favorite science fiction writer. He wrote this incredible two-part essay, "Times Square Red/Times Square Blue." He grew up in an African American community in the Bronx, and he hung out in the West Village in the '60s during the burgeoning folk scene, and so he was privy to a lot of different demographics and cultural institutions. And in the essay he says the most genuine and guileless interracial and cross-class contact he ever saw in New York City was cruising in the porno theaters. He said downtown he was always acutely aware of his blackness, in the Bronx he was hyper-cognizant of his queerness, but in the theaters he didn't have to think about either.

I feel like to a lesser extent a good pizzeria serves the same social function, it's the great leveler. That's why Palace Pizza is so good. Because you walk in there, and it doesn't matter if you just slamdunked the Henderson Account or if you just got off work shoveling shit for the Department of Sanitation, you're just sitting down to get a slice of pizza and the pizza man is gonna be kind of a dick to you. Unless you're me, in which case you get treated like a king.

But Sam Delaney, I really wanted to get him to come eat pizza in Times Square with me. It never worked out, though not for lack of trying on my part.



MRR: Just to go back to the idea of having guests along with you, whether they were the experts you would've wished or the touring band from nowhere. In the reviews the sense of friendship is palpable, but often there's wariness or a realization that they don't really know what they're talking about when it comes to pizza.
Part of what was fun for me in doing this was making up fake controversies and regional stereotypes. So like, coincidentally the first five times I went to eat pizza with people from Florida, it was pouring rain. Something was weird about that, so their opinions about pizza became suspect. And I had a similar thing with the Bay Area and people from California in general, I would pretend that the way those people thought about pizza was just inherently wrong. I would make these little jabs that were like, "Okay, Nate Stark says that this pizza was delicious but he's from the Bay so what would he know?" But honestly, Nate worked in pizzerias as a teenager so he probably knows more about pizza than I do.

But it was nice to create these little fake beefs. I grew up listening to hip hop in New York in the '90s, and rap beefs were part of the fun, like in professional wrestling. When we were teenagers my friend Ella and I had a zine beef. These not-so-serious conflicts that are more theatrical than anything else, I think they really help move the story along.

One thing I wanna talk about too is that, growing up playing in punk bands, I was also really into the whole Rawkus records underground rap scene that was developing in New York in the late '90s. Doing rap stuff as well as punk stuff was very galvanizing to me as a young dude. I felt this intense jealousy that the creation of a hip hop album or song was more... Well, a band is this cohesive unit. But with a rap crew, it's these individuals who come together. They all have their solo albums and they're all on each other's solo albums and I always wished there was some way I could like, do a posse track. I always wanted to have all my friends be on my album or whatever. It doesn't work so well in the punk band format. Rancid tried to do that a lot and NYHC bands tried to do that, but it doesn't work. Having Tim Armstrong sing half a verse on an Agnostic Front song is stupid.

But doing this zine was kind of a long form posse cut where I was like, "now I'm gonna get Ben Trogdon to come do a verse, now I'm gonna get my girl Christina, Ella is gonna show up, Kever is gonna ride up on his bike." And I could talk about all my friends whom I was proud of, and I could talk about all the cool things they were doing, in a way that felt seamless in terms of the overall narrative of one guy eating pizza. It wasn't ham-fisted. It was part of the story.

MRR: So you've gone to every place, you've covered Manhattan, the fanzine in the form it's been is starting to wind down, and you're starting to look towards doing a book, but it's not going to be a collection of just the reviews?
I'm hoping for a kind of cross between *Rats* by Robert Sullivan and *How to Talk Dirty and Influence People*, Lenny Bruce's memoir. I hesitate to talk about whatever book I'm gonna write as a memoir, I think of it as more of a long-form fanzine, but I want to make a cohesive document come out of this project besides just the reviews. There are insights that I began to touch on in writing some of these reviews that could stand to be elaborated upon, and I'm gonna take the book as an opportunity to stretch some of that out and have room for some of the stuff that I always wanted to talk about but maybe held myself back for the sake of brevity.

MRR: And the fanzine's are available....
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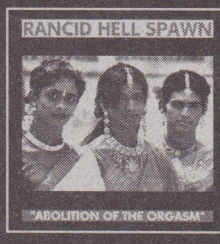

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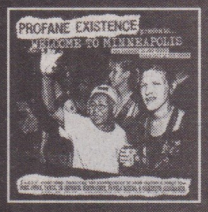

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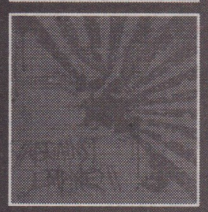

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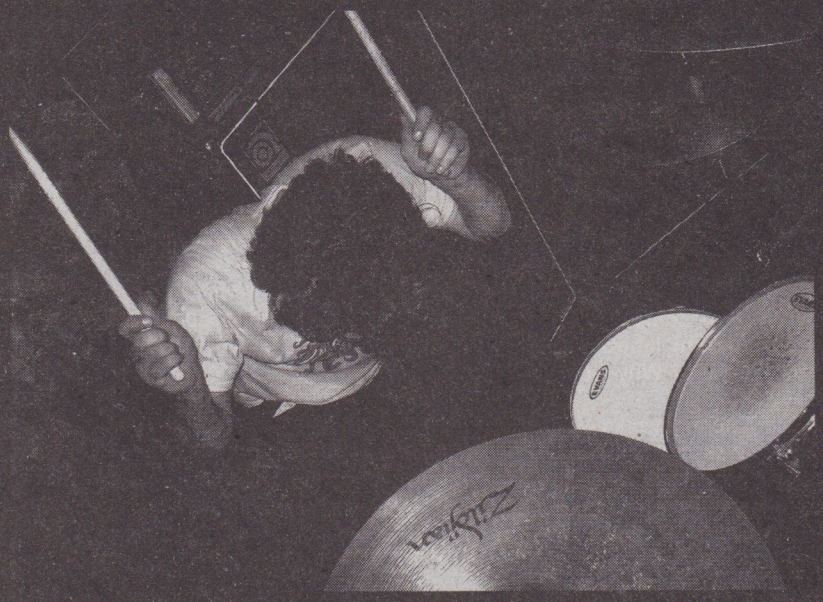
Featuring former and current members of more great bands than you can count on both hands, Iron Hand is a band that just oozes talent. They play face pummeling crust/D-beat, featuring powerful riffs that get caught in your head, raw barking vocals, and witty, incisive lyrics. Hailing from Connecticut, a state currently brimming with talented hardcore and punk bands, Iron Hand stands out for the raw intensity they manage to cram into both live performances and recordings. Vocalist Brian Frenette spoke to Paul J. Comeau over the phone about the band's history, their writing process, and why the 7" is the ideal format for punk music.
Interview by Paul J. Comeau

IRON HAND



MRR: How did Iron Hand first get started, and how has it evolved to where it is today?
Brian: Iron Hand started in late 2008. Ryan and I had been in another band together, They And The Children, and that band had broken up, and we wanted to do something else together. We wanted it to have a straightforward hardcore punk band, have a grittier sound. We talked about that and were both on the same page about what we wanted to do, so we decided to start that project up. We spoke to Shane and Paul from Oiltanker who were our original rhythm section. Brian Pauze was into the project as a guitar player; he was our roommate at the time. Over the course of time we had the change of the rhythm section, when Ross and Stefan came in.

MRR: When did that change happen?
Brian: I think sometime in the summer of...it had to be the summer of 2010. We'd been playing for a while. We played our last show with Paul and Shane, and then we had a significant period of time where we were kind of going through this shift. Stefan came in, and then eventually Ross came in. That changed a bit of the sound, and it sort of developed on its own. With Ryan and Brian and I all living in the same house, we'd practice and exchange ideas, and it all took shape from there.

MRR: Where did the name Iron Hand come from?
Brian: I honestly don't know. I recall coming up with the name as part of a list of suggestions I had strewn together from various trains of thought. We discussed [the list] and that was the one everyone seemed to like, and it stuck.

MRR: It's a badass name.
Brian: Thanks. It's not as exciting of a story [laughs]. It's a really simple way to come about it. We wanted something that would be short, sweet and to the point.

MRR: Iron Hand identifies as a D-beat / crust band, but all its members have been in bands in the past with a diverse array of sounds. How does the diversity of influences the band brings to the table affect the band's sound, and how do your influences manifest themselves in the music you play?
Brian: Influentially, with Iron Hand it's definitely a lot of Scandinavian and Japanese D-beat bands and a lot of the New England, and

especially Northwestern Connecticut, crust bands—so bands like Deformed Conscience, Hail Of Rage, and State Of Fear. Those are definitely largely influential in how we developed a sound, not necessarily initially, but over time. It's definitely been a perpetual refining of things. Because we've all been in an array of different types of bands, I think we all enjoy the fact that this band has a pretty clear focus, and we've enjoyed having that focus thus far.

MRR: Do you write all the lyrics?
Brian: I do.

MRR: What are your lyrical influences, and what sort of themes do you address in your lyrics?
Brian: Well I think as a lyricist, you try to write songs that touch on personal events and personal instances while also being general enough to be of interest to those listening to your record. It's a perpetual back and forth to make sure you're speaking with some sincerity, but also speaking about something that isn't such an inside story that no one knows what you're talking about. It's easy too in that style of music to have—I think the customary approach is to have a very nihilistic outlook. I wouldn't say we don't have that; however, I think it's also important to try and not simply address things as what they are, but also speak of where to go from there and what to do about it. I mean, you look at the world around you, and you see classist structures and the economic turmoil of the last several years, throughout essentially the existence of the band. I can say that has greatly influenced a number of the songs, and I think those influences are pretty clear when you read the lyrics. And, like I said, there are personal things that you try to talk about in a general sense, that you address as well. Those influences come from current events and being aware of what's going on around you.

MRR: Iron Hand recently released two 7"s, *Usurper Divine* on Redscroll records, and *Liquid Assets* on Safety Meeting records. How did you come to the decision to release two 7"s on different labels, as opposed to an LP, or some other release? Why work with these two labels specifically?
Brian: I think we collectively felt the 7" format works well for punk bands in general, hardcore bands, crust bands—however you want to define it. So it's enticing to have a pithy burst of energy, a burst of music coming out of the format that's limited to fourteen minutes or so. We had several new songs that weren't on our demo, but we really liked a pair or so of the older songs that we wanted to rerecord. Actually on the Safety Meeting release, the songs "Liquid Assets," and "An Ode To No One," were songs that were originally on our demo, and were rerecorded. All the songs for both releases were recorded in the same session. We thought that since the Red Scroll release came about first, we wanted to really showcase a

lot of our newer material, and we had these two older songs and the cover, which fit nicely into the format of the second 7". Carlos from Safety Meeting had gotten in touch with us after we'd begun talking to Red Scroll, and he wanted to do a 7". I'd known Carlos for a while, we were familiar with Safety Meeting as a label, and we were friends with a lot of the bands on that roster, so it was a cool thing to be a part of. We tried to think of how we could be a part of it without changing the plans we'd already made with our other good friend's label. So that was the compromise, and it was a great way to actually get all this material we'd put together out at once.

MRR: If the 7" is the ideal format for punk music, how do you see that changing in the digital age?
Brian: With more and more releases being digital, it will certainly alter some aspects of the format. However, I think the pithiness and brevity of an EP, or more generally, the 7" format, is still helpful to get a glimpse of a band. Whether you're buying a physical copy or downloading it online, I think the general strategy remains the same.

MRR: You mention that you recorded all the songs on your 7"s in the same session. What was the recording process like?
Brian: We recorded the songs in our basement in our house in New Haven. Brian Pauze records bands so he had all the equipment, and we had our friend Dan come in and use all that equipment to record us.

MRR: When you went in to record, you already had all the songs written?
Brian: Yeah.

MRR: What is your writing process like?
Brian: We try to practice consistently and usually that practice session will include going through everything that we've written, and then we just try and hash out new ideas until they begin to develop some sort of structure. There's kind of a sense of knowing that "hey this song is done." Then it's time to refine it, get lyrics working with it, and start to play it live.

MRR: Iron Hand covered the song "122 Hours of Fear" by Screamers on the *Liquid Assets* 7". What does this song mean to you, and why cover it?
Brian: We thought it was a really awesome song, and we thought it would sound really cool if we kind of made it fit to our style of playing. I mean, the Screamers are a good band and it's a badass song. It was Brian Pauze's idea. He introduced the idea to us, and I thought it was really cool to do a cover song where the band being covered had no guitars, and we have three guitars—two guitars and a bass—so we were coming from an entirely different perspective. I guess punk is punk, but it was a really interesting way to put our own mark on a song we all really liked from a very seminal band.

MRR: Connecticut has a very vibrant punk scene, with a history of amazing bands. How do you see the current state of the punk scene in

Connecticut, and how does Iron Hand fit into that?
Brian: What's going on in Connecticut now is really exciting and it's really fun to be a part of it. To have consistent show spaces at a DIY level, to have different areas of the state concurrently booking shows and producing bands, and having consistent crowds, and people that are involved and being a part of everything. It's not a small handful of people carrying the burden of getting bands to come into the area and starting labels and releasing records and all that. It's really happening on all cylinders across the board from a lot of people. Over the years, the last few years especially, you begin to see a lot of people who you didn't see in '07, '08, and '09, certainly show up, and not only show up, but they're starting bands and booking shows, and things of that nature. It's really exciting in that regard.

As far as where we fit into all that, because of our aforementioned other bands that all have different sounds and styles, people who aren't familiar with punk or hardcore bands, and are more familiar with garage bands or indie bands, or however you want to characterize those bands, they know us from maybe those projects and are interested in having us do our thing without really acknowledging it as different or strange or foreign; it's just our thing. It's nice and simple.

MRR: You booked shows in the early part of the 2000s. Do you see yourself booking shows again in the future?
Brian: Yeah, I guess I was booking shows really consistently at that time. I think between 2002 and 2004 I put together almost 80 shows because I was in college, and I was able to utilize that time and free spaces and all that. But even since then, certainly by no means as consistently, I've been booking shows throughout. Since I got out of there… hell for the last ten years now I've been booking shows on and off. I just moved up to Northampton, Mass. Having some friends up there and getting involved in what's going on up there, I'm actually trying to book shows with a bit more consistency up there, to help bridge that gap, because it's only fifty minutes from Hartford, so it's great to get all those crowds intermixed.

MRR: How has moving to Northampton affected you being in Iron Hand?
Brian: Not a whole lot. Those guys write songs and put everything together if I'm there or not. They just practice and do their thing, and if they complete something they will usually make a practice recording, and then just send it to me via email. Once I have lyrics put together then we'll do the thing where we all come down, or if we need to practice the set, I'll come down. It's only an hour and a half drive. I think we are just a bit more deliberate, at least with the five of us all being in the same room. The four of them certainly haven't missed a beat.

MRR: As a punk and an adult with a professional career, how do you strike a balance between your professional life and your punk life?
Brian: Different people have different perceptions on this, and it can be a rather interesting (and perhaps tricky) subject. Personally, I really like what I do and I get a lot of satisfaction out of it. Working in education, I suppose I am one of those people who like to think they are somehow contributing their attitudes or general perceptions of the world into what they do, and therefore it's not so direct an opposition to being in a band or being a punk. Perhaps that's just how I've come to rationalize it in order to not feel contradictory, haha. But in all seriousness I don't see it as perpetually intrusive or "getting in the way" of my own artistic or musical interests. I mean, it can at times, but nothing is ever perfect.

MRR: If it were ever possible to do Iron Hand full-time, is that something you would do? Is there something contradictory about trying to play punk music for a living?
Brian: The concept of being in a band "full-time" just seems so loaded. By even referring to it as "full-time," it suddenly gives the attitude that it's this burden sapping all of your energies. On the other hand, I've never known anyone to refer to being in a band "part-time." It just seems to imply that you set aside a block of time to work on things. Everyone has different perceptions of what defines an active or passive band, and honestly I don't think I have a consistent definition.

MRR: So what are the plans for the future of Iron Hand?
Brian: We have four new songs written, and we're looking to try and put something together with Stone Titan from Windsor, CT, but we're not quite sure what shape that's gonna take yet. We just want to keep writing and maybe do an EP, something that kind of showcases what we're doing at this point. We don't want to hold onto material for too long. Living in the Northeast, it makes it relatively simple to play shows out of state without having to drive a thousand hours to get somewhere, so hopefully we'll be able to take proper advantage of that and get out there.

For more on Iron Hand, and to hear some of their music, check out their Bandcamp and their blog:
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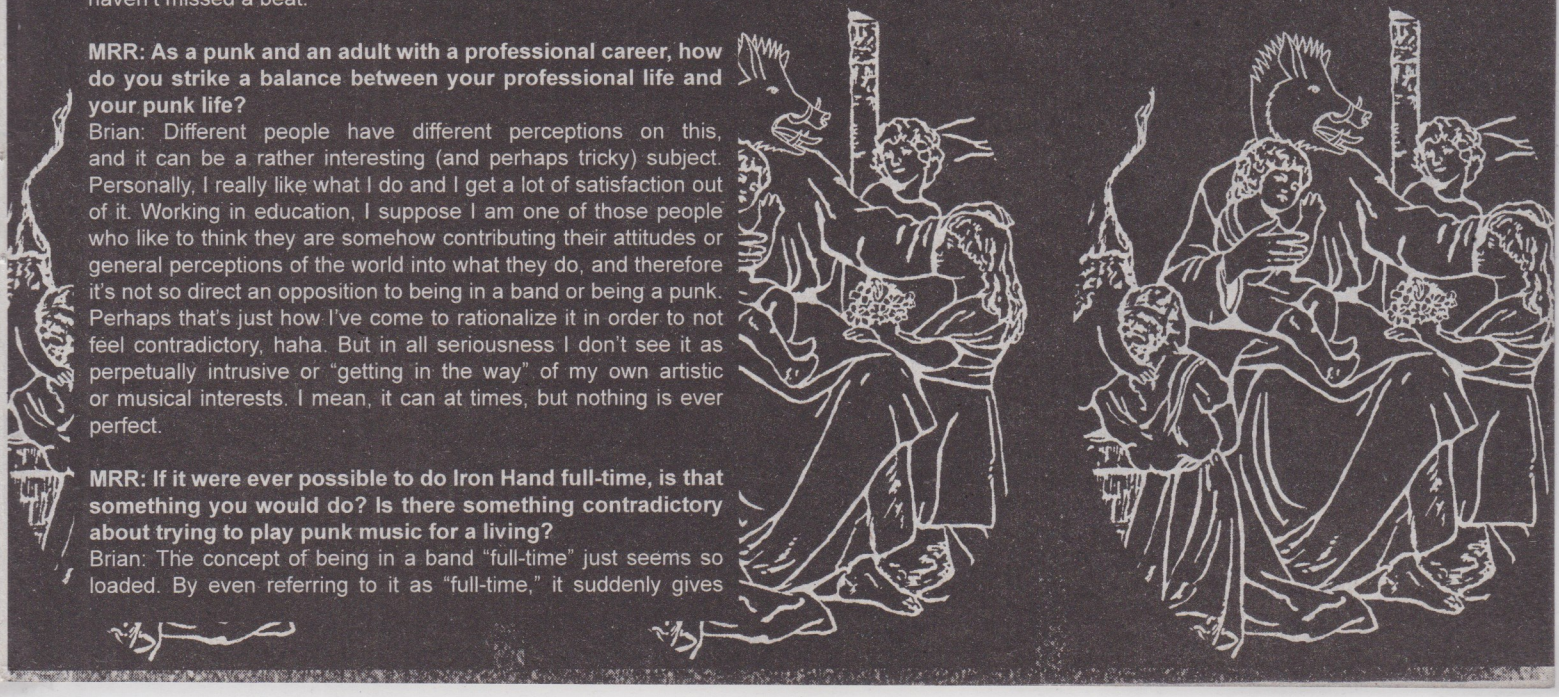


CRIMINAL CODE

Hailing from Tacoma, Washington, once ranked as the most stressful place in the States, Criminal Code offer a sobering take on Northwest life. Not unlike the bastard nephews of Paul Westerberg and Bob Mould rifling through Greg Sage's riff box, this outfit comprised of, as a recent flyer claimed, 47% of every Northwest Hardcore band, is, hands down, one of the best things to come from this region in a while.
Intro by Collin, Interview by Lammie, Photos Dinger/Jeff Waites

MRR: Where does the name Criminal Code come from? It's definitely an abstract name.. Was this a deliberate choice?
We came up with the band name at practice one night. Our old drummer got it from a Cortex song. We had our first show booked, and we thought it would be best to play the show with a name. We didn't put too much time into it. We were so focused on writing songs and rehearsing that the band name was really unimportant at the time. I still don't even think about it. I kind of hate the name because it's hard for me to pronounce, 'cause of my English.

MRR: What's up with the logo? Is there a story behind that?
We were trying to figure out artwork for our demo, and our old drummer brought in this template, and it was a square. He had some ideas to put images in that blank square, and started showing us some artwork. I was really stuck on the square itself, and said, "Hey, the artwork should just be blank with only the square." Everyone kind of laughed, and then ten minutes later we realized it was a cool idea. It's minimal, bold and very identifiable. Then about two months after releasing our 7" a friend showed me The Sods – *No Pictures* 7". Turns out we were 30 years too late. That single rules so hard too. Luckily they just used it for that single, so it's not that huge of a deal.

MRR: You told me *Dry Spell*, the demo, would be included on the upcoming 12" on Inimical Records, because Mike Crow, (head of Inimical Records), liked the song a lot. However, you also told me that you didn't see much of a point in re-releasing songs. Care to explain?
Yeah, a lot of bands want to give their songs an "official" release. I don't like regressing and re-releasing a song that's already been made available to people. The output of songs in our band is rapid, so I'd rather focus on recording and writing new songs. Crow recommended we put *Dry Spell* on our 12" and normally I would have said no, but the song sounds different with a new drummer and second guitar player. It's been revised, and I think it would give people a chance to see how much we've changed since the 7". Plus Mike saved me from getting jumped by a drunk guy once, so I kind of owe it to him.

MRR: How did Inimical end up releasing the upcoming record? What's the story about Mike saving your ass?
I've known Mike Crow for a while, just through shows, but I don't think I started really talking to him until a year or so. He heard about our band and asked me to bring a demo tape to him at a Deskonocidos/Big Crux show. We kept in touch ever since.

Oh yeah getting jumped...so we played a show in Seattle with Dirty Marquee a while back. This was the first show we played with our second guitar player Miles. I was wearing a striped t-shirt on that night, and a drunk crusty guy was really bothered by it. He said some shit to me, but I knew he was wasted, so I just ignored him. Then about an hour goes by and I hear some yelling, and the next thing I know, the drunk crusty is charging at me. Mike Crow jumps in front of me, grabs this dude and throws him to the ground. It was raining pretty hard that night, so the guy went sliding on the grass for a good few feet. Mike runs over and stands over this guy, wondering if he should just beat the shit out of him. He cools off and walks away, but after taking like four steps he decides to turn back around and kick him in the ribs. Then Mike started gathering his stuff to leave, and while he's leaving he yells, "Yeah if you guys record enough songs for a 12" EP, I'll put it out." It was a very Suge Knight moment.

MRR: Some would say demo tapes are a misplaced form of nostalgia. What are your thoughts about this?
I started getting emails and letters once we got a positive review in *MRR* and some blogs. I shipped quite a few tapes overseas.

I like the cassette, because demo tapes are a classic format, especially with punk music. It's cool corresponding with people, and shipping things out. It's gratifying to interact with people instead of just posting songs online. One time this guy from Texas wrote me a letter asking for a demo. I didn't have any, but I wrote him back pretty much saying, "Nope, sorry. We'll have a 7" out soon," and wrote down my email. A few days go by and I get another letter from him asking when it will be out. We kept writing back and forth, and eventually our 7' was out and I mailed him one. I remember thinking...man, if he just wrote me an email, I probably could have saved all the stamps I used up, but communicating through letters was really personal and flattering.

MRR: How come you released the EP yourselves? Was that a conscious decision or was it out of necessity, i.e. were there no offers from labels?
I put out the record myself, because I didn't want to sit and just wait for an opportunity to come by. I wanted to keep writing songs and keep the momentum of our band going. I remember I got in a car wreck right when I was about to front the money for mastering. I remember how much that accident slowed down everything. A few days later I ran into a friend from middle school I haven't seen in years. We hung out, and I started sharing my ideas of releasing my bands record when I got enough money. Then the next day he came over and wrote me a check for $1000, and told me to pay him back when I can. It was really cool and extremely nice of him. I'm like almost done finally paying him off.

MRR: When I mentioned you guys being from Olympia in a review of the EP, you told me that was inaccurate since none of you lived in the city anymore. What happened? Were you just pointing out an inaccuracy on my behalf, or was there more the dissociation from Olympia?
Our old drummer lives in Olympia, and once he was out of the band, I didn't want to be tagged an Olympia band anymore. He was the only member from that town, so it was funny being labeled an Olympia band in the first place. I think people assume us to act, and sound a certain way based on the place we are from. The band's location has no importance to us at all.

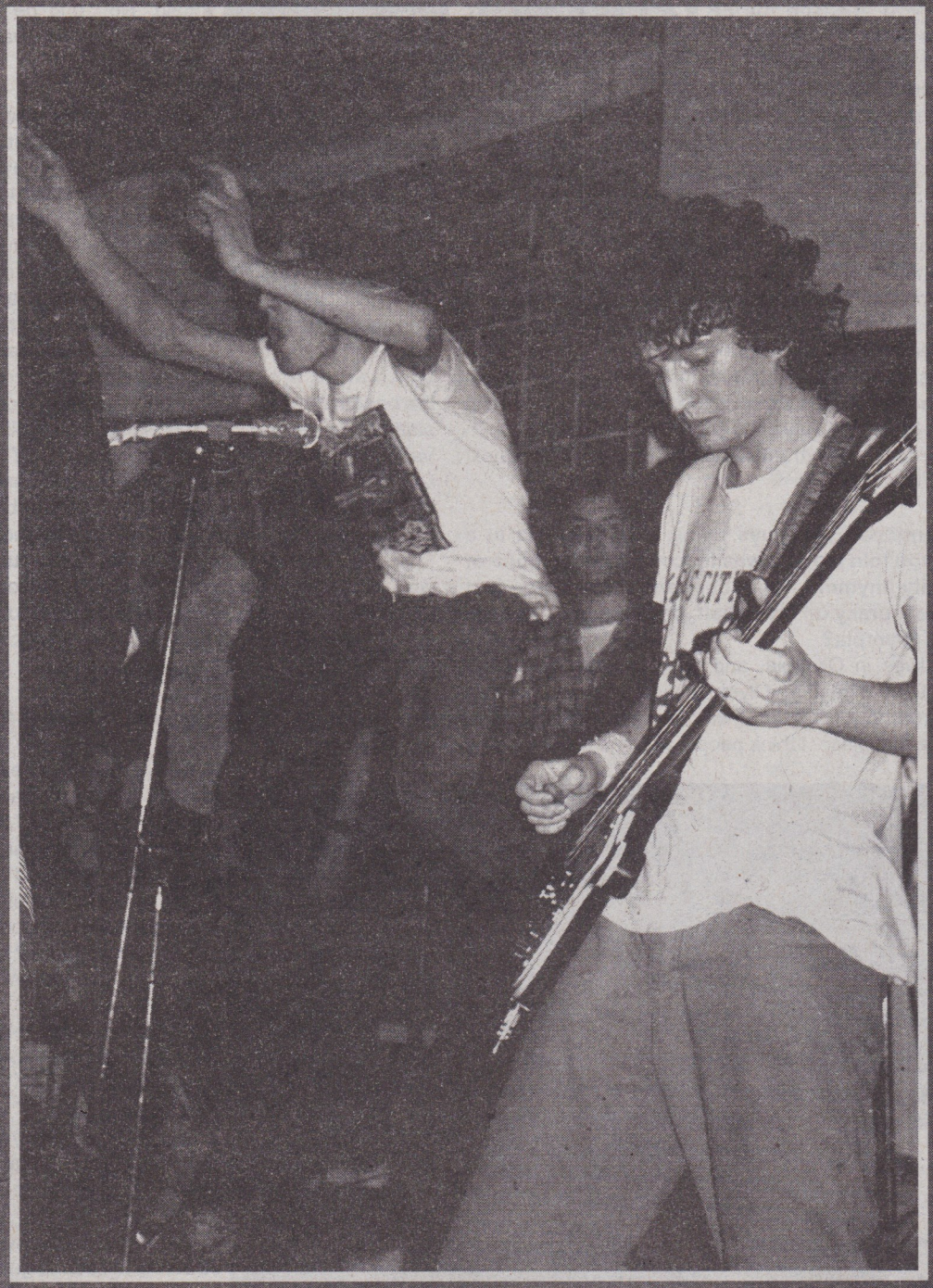
The city has been talked up in the pages of *MRR* quite a bit for the past year or so. Some would throw in the H-word (hype). Does that bug you?
Olympia has some great people and the majority of bands and records that have been getting attention lately definitely deserve it (in my opinion). When we did our little trip down the west coast with Big Crux last summer, I remember this guy looking at our record after our set at one of the shows. He comes up to me and seems to be interested in buying our record, but asks me if we were from Olympia first. I said "No," and he immediately puts our record down and walks away. It was pretty funny.

You're pretty close to Canada and played the Vacant State LP release show in Vancouver in late 2011. Is there a Northwest-Canadian punk rock connection? Vacant State is not the kind of band I'd linked to Criminal Code myself. It's cool to see different bands playing shows together or perhaps you'd argue that there's not that much of a difference really?
Vancouver is only like a few hours away from Seattle, so a lot of the bands from Seattle goes up there and vice versa. When we first started I remember corresponding and mailing stuff to Adam from Vacant State. He really liked our demo and 7' a lot, and it turned out Daryl from Big Crux was also good buddies/bandmates with him. When the Vacant State LP came out, the band invited Code and Big Crux to come to Canada and play the record release show. Jim from Big Crux was filling in on drums for us at the time, so it all worked out. That show is still one of my favorite shows I've played. It was attended by a very diverse crowd and had very high energy. Everyone in the band likes hardcore music, and luckily we get to play with bands we like.

Are there any particular bands that you take influences from as a band?
My main intention when starting the band was to have Husker Du and The Replacements as my main core of influences. When we recorded our demo and listened to the tape back, we were kind of shocked. It didn't sound like what any of us thought it originally did. I guess it's a good thing, because there are definitely a lot of bands that straight up just do worship bands. It's 2012 after all.

Inimical will soon release your debut 12". Can you tell me something about that? When will it be out?
The *Cold Thought* 12" EP will be out hopefully in late February/early March. Then we'll try and do a good lengthy tour through West Coast/Southwest. We recorded the 12"EP at the fabulous Buzz or Howl Studios, and this is our first recording with our new drummer Jawsh, and second guitar player Miles. I think we've acquired a new sound and different element with both of those additions. Buy it, or Mike will kick me in the ribs.

Indigesti



With their cult album *Osservati Dall'Inganno* back in stores, Silvio (bass) and Enrico (guitar) talk to us about this introspective and original band from the Italian region of Piedmont: from their split with Wretched to their legendary tour in the U.S.

Interviewed by Giorgio Senesi

Translation by Andrea Marra

MRR: How did you come up with the idea of making one of the first DIY records with Wretched from Milan? At the time, Italian music magazine Rockerilla only reviewed your side of the split, why?
Enrico: It was both due to financial reasons and also to our friendship with Wretched, we had already played several shows with them. Plus, we didn't have an entire EP's worth of completed songs. But I don't remember Rockerilla only reviewing the Indigesti side. *[Actually, the Wretched side wasn't mentioned in the infamous review due to their refusal to be reviewed in Rockerilla magazine –ed.].*

MRR: Is it true that during your first show at the Virus in Milan the crowd heckled you, singing the famous "Aiazzone" furniture factory jingle *[the Aiazzone company was based in Biella, Indigesti's hometown, and was well known in Italy in the 1980s for its TV commercials –ed.]*? Was the crowd really that closed minded toward people coming from smaller towns?
Enrico: Early during our first show at the Virus there actually was a chant going, with the famous "Aiazzone" slogan. It was just for fun, we were already friends with the punks at the Virus and it was more like the beginning of a musical challenge between them and us. They had never seen us live so, once we started playing we just gave it all we had. Our songs were powerful and fast, plus we had Rudy and his legendary jumps. So it wasn't long before a large group of punks started going crazy at that show.
Silvio: That's exactly how it went. Right after the show, everyone in the punk scene was talking about Indigesti. I still hadn't joined the band and they were the most incredible and exciting thing I had ever seen.

MRR: Indigesti's lyrics and graphics always stood out from the typical hardcore punk genre's rules in a pretty original way, I'd say. What inspired you?
Enrico: Knowing Rudy, I'd say he just shifted from the "classic punk style" of protesting against an unjust society to a more "intimist" or cryptic phase, which had more to do with personal feelings and emotions. But even then, he still offered ideas and thoughts concerning life, although it was obviously in a less direct way, compared to the lyrics he wrote in the band's initial phase.
Silvio: I came from a pretty specific background, I was into noisy and cultivated rock bands like Sonic Youth and Swans, underground art, Dada, jazz improvisation. These are all things I tried to put into the band, maybe even unawarely.

MRR: Your Osservati Dall'Inganno LP was released by the T.V.O.R. On Vinyl label. How did that collaboration come about?
Silvio: Stiv *["Rottame" Valli, the label's boss –ed.]* asked us to release *Osservati Dall'Inganno* on T.V.O.R. On Vinyl and we agreed. We covered half of the production costs. Stiv worked very hard, compared to the fairly disastrous standards in the Italian hardcore scene.
Enrico: We have no idea as to how many copies of *Osservati Dall'Inganno* were pressed. It may even be a pleasant surprise for us to discover that we actually sold more than what we thought we had. We remember an excellent joint effort with Stiv, which also brought about other things, like the t-shirt with his graphics and the cover of the repress of *Osservati* with his artwork. I think it's safe to say that, for some time, Stiv was our official graphic artist.

MRR: You were one of the first Italian bands to make it over to the US for a long tour, how did that go?
Enrico: The tour in the States was something the whole band was very excited about. After two European tours we were ready to cross the ocean, with all the doubts and fears that something like that can bring, but it was also very stimulating. We played twenty two shows in the US and, actually, only four or five were in large venues with big bands, like the Chicago show with 7 Seconds. That was simply because we weren't very well known over there.
Silvio: I'm currently reading *Our Band Could Be Your Life*, a book about the adventures of Sonic Youth, Hüsker Dü, etc. Well, I have to admit that our first and only US tour was a lot better than theirs. All in all, we had some bad shows and some great shows.

MRR: Any regrets for having split up so early?
Enrico: Yes, of course! Unfortunately, Rudy got sick during our last tour in the summer of 1987. He even had to be hospitalized for two days, though he got well somehow and we were able to finish the tour. But, when we got home, Rudy's weakness and illness were pretty obvious, he looked like a zombie. His parents forced him to choose, they talked to him about his health, and they were somehow able to convince him to quit. So that was the sudden ending of a great experience in music. Silvio, Massimino and I continued to practice for a few more months, we were looking for someone to replace Rudy, but things didn't work out.
Silvio: I'm sorry we never completed our second LP. Before the break up we had already finished seven or eight new songs. They were original, powerful and sounded fresh. Later, I discovered similar-sounding things in early Red Hot Chili Peppers and Jane's Addiction.

This interview originally ran in Italian in a zine by the LoveHate80.it folks:
"10 Anni Di Mucchi Selvaggi E Ossa Rotte In Italia" (10 Years Of Wild Bunches and Broken Bones in Italy) is a chaos zine released by LoveHate80.it, a documentary website about the Italian hardcore punk scene from the Eighties. Originally published in thirteen issues, the one featuring Indigesti is the final one, for the time being. Lovehate80.it is currently completing a long and hard effort on two new projects, a book and a DVD movie, both dealing with the Italian hardcore punk scene from the eighties.
"Dritti contro un muro – Straight against a wall" is a book by Angelo Bitonto, Giorgio Senesi and Roberto Sivilia where you'll read about: The origins of hardcore punk in Italy. Cities and hubs. Self-management, squats and politics. D.I.Y. cassettes and records. Radical fanzines and word-of-mouth communication. The concerts, rallies, demonstrations. The independent labels. Clashes, violence, excesses, drugs. The conflict between punk and the press, newspapers and social criticism magazines. The beginning, peak and decline of the big bands of the 80s. 140 protagonists from the first wave of Italian hardcore punk tell their story. 420 direct, fast, distorted and sweaty pages. Over 100 bands. Plenty of previously unseen images, photographs, posters, flyers, covers and newspaper articles from the time. DRITTI CONTRO UN MURO - STRAIGHT AGAINST A WALL is the product of eight years of interviews and thousands of kilometers traveled all over Italy.
These two projects, the book and the movie, are planned to be out in mid-2012. Anyone interested in publishing the book for US or European readers should get in touch with Lovehate80.it by writing to: giorgio@lovehate80.it.

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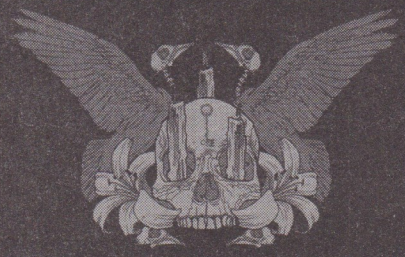

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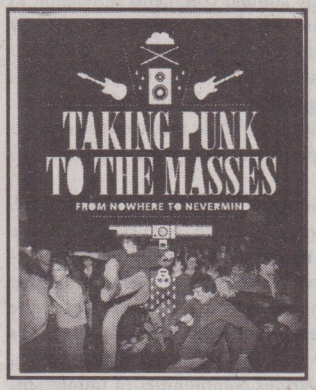

Taking Punk to the Masses: From Nowhere to Nevermind
Edited by Jacob McMurray
233 pages • $29.99
Fantagraphics Books
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Seattle, WA 98115
www.fantagraphicsbooks.com

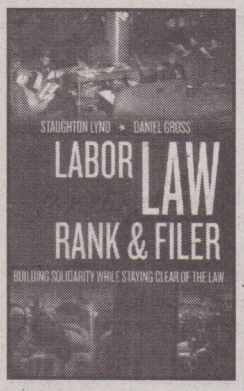
A little bit of initial follow-the-money: while this book technically meets *MRR* review criteria, it was compiled by the senior curator at the Experience Music Project (EMP) which, for those of you that don't know, is a music museum in Seattle that was founded by Microsoft billionaire Paul Allen, who bought an 80% share of Ticketmaster in 1993, one year before at least one band prominently featured in this book spearheaded a boycott of the company. Allen also has several real estate holdings in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood, home of at least two venues featured on flyers in this book (one of which is now the site of a Marriott hotel), and where a battle to keep the area affordable continues in the face of it becoming a hub for biotechnology and related industries. So no matter how much he loves Jimi Hendrix, he still owns four condo complexes in a neighborhood whose gentrification will benefit him and hurt exactly the kinds of people that actually created the culture that is the subject of this book. That delicious irony is probably lost on him, though.

This "visual history" features photos of "artifacts" (their word, certainly not mine) from the EMP's permanent collection, with each piece of memorabilia accompanied by a blurb written by the curator, and relevant quotes from people interviewed. The material is primarily but not exclusively Northwest, and covers roughly 1975 to 1995, with a few pieces going before or after these dates. You get everything from Vivienne Westwood-designed clothing to old flyers and demos, to guitars (smashed and otherwise), to the mixing board used to record *Bleach*, and so forth. The reprinted old flyers, original artwork, and zine covers are the best part of this book, and I think have the most historical value, while I think shit like Nirvana's contract with Sub Pop, some old club's cash register, or the *fuzzy sweater* that Kurt wore on the cover of Spin is tacky as fuck, and only interesting to the kinds of people that think autographs are cool. The story of how punk was brought to the masses is not really articulated, and yet I feel like this is one of those tales that says that punk was only important *because* it was brought to the masses.

The blurbs are written in museum-style language for people without any cultural context, but given that a lot of the middle part of the book deals with nationally known independent bands coming to and forming ties with Seattle, the majority of the history here has been covered before in *Our Band Could Be Your Life*, *Loser: The Real Seattle Music Story*, the northwest chapter in *American Hardcore*, and of course the numerous books about that one power trio from Aberdeen; and as someone who has read a lot about this history, I don't feel like the visual aspect adds that much to my understanding or appreciation of it. While the writing is relatively level-headed, I wouldn't recommend this book to people who have already read about this time period—though the earlier half of the book touches on a lot of legitimate Northwest punk history that hasn't received as much attention, including bands such as the Lewd, Vains, and Silly Killers. The book also includes a DVD of the full interviews from which the book's quotes are drawn. Every big name music documentary talking head you'd imagine is included, though the clip of Megan Jasper explaining how the *New York Times* fell for her grunge-speak prank is worth the admission price.

Synopsis? Fairweather music fans that might go to the EMP or the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—and take what they say about "The Sixties" or "The Olympia Scene" as the definitive word—will probably be fascinated by this, um, visual history. But for anyone with an actual interest in what is an important and unique history—regardless of the validation it received because of Nirvana—there are far better places to turn.

— Dan Goetz



Labor Law for the Rank and Filer
Staughton Lynd and Daniel Gross
110 pages • $10
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

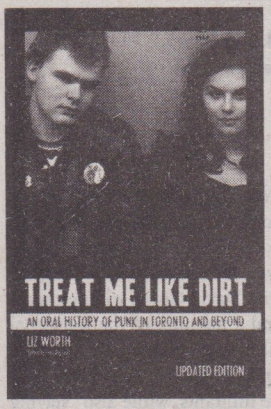
Staughton Lynd is a veteran leftist activist, with many decades of experience in the civil rights, anti-war, and labor movements of the United States. He is also a historian and a labor lawyer. He has written *Labor Law for the Rank and Filer* with David Gross, whom I guess is also a labor lawyer and a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. This book aims to give rank and file labor activists the knowledge of US labor law that they need to be effective militants, while also "staying clear of the law."

Lynd and Gross give a brief and accessible overview of key pieces of legislation and case law (that means court decisions that have the force of law) that impact the rights of working people in the United States. The authors' detailed and comprehensive overview of specific laws and court rulings is the main strength of the book. From the cornerstone pieces of legislation such as the National Labor Relations Act (also know as the Wagner Act) and the anti-worker Taft Hartley, to lesser know court cases that have upheld the right to wear campaign buttons and post critical leaflets on union billboards, Lynd and Gross provide vital information for all rank and file militants. Along with these descriptions, the authors give a political and ideological argument, saying that ideally workers should rely on themselves and the solidarity of their fellow workers, rather than rely on the law (which of course is massively skewed in favor of the bosses). The authors seem to put forward two basic perspectives when discussing labor law: First, rank and file militants need to know labor law to make them more effective organizers. Second, having the knowledge of labor law needed to be an effective rank and file militant has the added benefit of allowing a worker to be able to organize and advocate for her/his coworkers independently of lawyers and other "experts". The idea that working class emancipation is the act of the workers themselves permeates every page of this book. However, the authors do present a fairly nuanced view of the law, acknowledging that provisions such as the famous Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act do contain key protections for workers, while also having the effect of shifting the focus of union struggles away from shop floor militancy and into official legal channels.

Toward the end of the book there is a chapter on what Lynd and Gross call "solidarity unionism" which is counterposed to business unionism. This is mostly an abstraction, and is essentially a group of principles for what the authors think would be a better kind of unionism than what exists in the US today. These principles include direct action, workers control of the union, and membership that a worker carries with her/him even if she/he no longer is employed at the workplace. Any radical trade unionist would be sympathetic of these concepts. However, Lynd and Gross do not give much of a sense on how to build such a union today (to paraphrase legendary Wobblie organizer James P. Cannon, the art of politics is to know what to do next), and they make some questionable arguments. For instance, they discuss how dues check off (when union dues are deducted from a workers pay check automatically) has taken some of the internal dynamism out of unions. This may be true (and their argument is compelling in the abstract) but abolishing dues check off is a central plank in the recent right wing assault on unions in the US. It is hard to imagine radicals getting much hearing about such a concept. Furthermore, they point to "minority unionism" (Lynd and Gross call it "non-majority unionism") that organizes workers in a workplace without majority representation or a collective bargaining agreement. The United Electrical union in North Carolina and the IWW in their campaign to unionize Starbucks has pursued this strategy. While this strategy has had some successes, as Joe Burns (another radical labor lawyer) has argued in his excellent book *Reviving the Strike*, these types of unions face the exact same problem as any other union: how to get the bosses to concede to workers demands. Burns argues that this means reviving production-stopping strikes, something that is mostly absent from Gross and Lynd's discussion of solidarity unionism.

In fact, all of the strategies suggested by Lynd and Gross, work-to-rule, community pressure, minority unionism etc, have been employed by unions to try to circumvent the need to revive production-stopping strikes. Essentially, the key ingredient is class struggle (which is a historic process, not a set of ideas or principles), and there are no magic bullets to build a new, stronger, more militant and democratic form of unionism. Despite these weaknesses, Lynd and Gross (and PM Press) have done a great service in making this book available to radical labor activists, and it should be on the shelves of all labor activists and allies of the labor movement.

— Robin Horne



Treat Me Like Dirt:
An Oral History Of Punk In Toronto And Beyond, 1977-1981
Liz Worth
383 pages • $19.95
ECW Press
www.ecwpress.com

Treat Me Like Dirt is a long awaited history of the punk scene in Toronto and beyond (specifically Hamilton) circa '77-'81. Documenting the history of punk in one city (let alone two) is a daunting project and Worth manages to cover a lot of bases within the 300-plus pages of this book. It's an oral history and the voices in the book are nothing less than riveting. Falling squarely into the Legs McNeil *Please Kill Me* school of punk history, you'll find running commentary from band members, early show promoters, fans and scenesters. These personal narratives offer readers a unique, first person perspective of what was taking place on the ground at a really pivotal time in punk history.

This book has received a lot of positive attention and I can understand why people appreciate the work as it is an expansive project. This history is about more than just the bands but it is organized along four central narrative arcs featuring Toronto bands the Viletones and the Diodes and Hamilton bands Simply Saucer and Teenage Head. I'm grateful for the inclusion of interviews with members of bands like the Ugly, the Curse, the Dishes, Dream Dates and the Demics. Overall I'd say that this is a great starting place for anyone interested in the history of punk in southern Ontario and I look forward to seeing what comes next in terms of follow up histories or sequels.

A difficulty inherent within this style of history is very simply the fact that it relies on memories. On some level thirty year old recollections are going to be mediated by what we know now. It means that you will find several, often radically different responses to a single issue all within the scope of a single page. I can also see how it may be tricky for some readers to follow all of the names despite the handy "Cast of Characters" that is provided. Having to flip back to the beginning of the book can become tedious at times. Hearing directly from folks who were there is invaluable but I would have loved it if Worth stepped in and offered some of her own analysis. In some respects, presenting these voices without any narrative or without social and historical background is problematic.

The crux of my issue with the lack of context stems from a question about who the book anticipates its readership to be. Is this a book for first generation, local punks looking to reminisce with favorite bands and old friends? Or is this book for the rest of us? Worth's only direct address to the reader speaks of her desire to uncover this historical information as someone getting into punk in the '90s. I think it's a safe assumption that the book is probably meant for those of us not intimately connected with Toronto/Hamilton between '77 and '81. That's why it's important to offer readers a little bit of context in terms of what was happening in southern Ontario back then. The time period covered in the book was not only crucial in terms of the development of punk locally, but it took place against the backdrop of a serious economic recession (skyrocketing gas prices, job losses, economic instability—sounds eerily familiar) and it was a time of intense social and cultural change in the region. We don't necessarily get that in reading the book and I think it would have been valuable to provide some of that as background. I also think that there are a lot of people who have been drawn to punk through its more political aspects and this isn't really addressed within the scope of this history.

For instance, we hear about the Blake Street boys, working class youth from a low income area in the east end of Toronto. These guys come up several times in the book, largely in relation to the violence they perpetrated within the scene. There is some discussion around whether Steve Leckie (Viletones) tried to manipulate them for his own devices and there are fleeting allusions to his class privilege in relation to them. I want to hear more about the class divide in those early days. There are a few brief references to class difference but more of a critical discussion around where these guys came from and what brought them into the mix would have been of real value. Where was their agency in all of this? Would they agree with the assessment of their motives/actions presented in the book? Unfortunately we don't hear from any of them directly so we don't really know.

There is a good amount of information presented on all-women bands like the Curse and the B-Girls and I appreciate the inclusion of voices of women like Margaret Barnes-DelColle (opened Toronto's first punk store), self described "girlfriends" like Elizabeth Aikenhead and fans like Nora Currie. They offer unique and valuable perspectives from differing places, on what was happening in the scene. Hearing from women who broke so much ground for successive generations of women is amazing. In contrast, there are also depressingly familiar comments in relation to some women that run along these lines: "I think Ruby used Mike to get to know people in the scene. She went out with Mike and then she started her own band… kind of a leech" (page 157). I can't help but wish that there was a little more attention afforded to expanding discussion around gender dynamics in that era. I think regardless of how the women in this book self-identify, the interviews presented establish some important groundwork for people interested in punk and feminism within Canada.

Issues of race within the scope of this history come up in a few different ways. Worth takes up the issue of Steve Leckie's (Viletones) alter ego "Nazi Dog." There are some comments that allude to the use of Nazi imagery as a political act of subversion. The Nazi references that cropped up through the Viletones were not limited to Leckie's on stage moniker, going further into song titles and lyrics. To be fair the book does include some comments from contemporaries who question the merits of Leckie's reliance on Fascist symbolism. The late '70s in Toronto were a time of some serious racial violence directed against various communities of immigrants and people of color. I think it adds a different dimension to the discussion but it doesn't come up in the book.

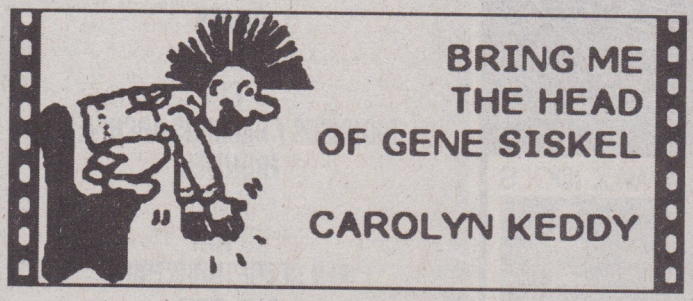
Former Viletones roadie Lawrence Makoto Kabayama, aka Nip Kicks, makes a statement in this book that I really wanted to share: "There was that diversity where you would be able to have long hair, short hair, no hair, blue hair, green hair. Every sexual orientation, every color; I thought that was such a cool thing, and yet how close-knit a community it could be because of that" (282). I read that and honestly wanted to scream: GIVE ME MORE! As far as I could discern, Makoto (in the interests of disclosing just how small-town Toronto can be sometimes: he and I were neighbors for a few years) is the only person of color that we hear from and it's disappointing that this is the only direct reference to the issue of race and inclusion within early punk rock in Toronto.

The one reference to race in this book that just annoyed me came out of Chapter 61, "The daily rebel." Beginning with a quote from Hamilton band the Forgotten Rebels song "Bomb the Boats and Feed the Fish" ("I don't want no foreign pricks to take my job away from me…I don't want them in my home"). This song and others from the band (i.e. "AIDS," "Ethiopia" and "Left My Heart In Iran") have always fucking made me crazy. Vocalist Mickey DeSadist posits them as "silly" and producer Bob Bryden says of the lyrics, "These are not sentiments I agree with, but I have to hand it to him for being able to translate those things into songs and make it fun" (304). I find it seriously hard to believe that these "hilarious" songs about homophobia and racism didn't have detractors contemporary to their release. I also don't understand the purpose of that particular quote if it's not going to be addressed within the scope of the chapter, let alone the book. At best this illustrates my point about the dangers of lack of context, at worst it's pandering to the band (here I'd like to segue to a polite request: fans of the Forgotten Rebels, please don't take this as an invitation to write me about my missing sense of humor, I can assure you that I do have one I am just sincere about not finding any of that shit funny).

All this being said, I honestly believe that this book offers an amazing document of the neglected histories of Toronto and Hamilton punk. It's great to hear from community members and bands that made an indelible impression on their peers, pop culture and subsequent generations of punks. While I was still doing my radio show I played bands like Simply Saucer, the Dream Dates, the Diodes and the Ugly with regular frequency (weekly in some cases), almost thirty years after the music was first recorded. That says something about the impact of these bands. The music, for me at least, is still relevant. I'm not sure you could say that of a lot of contemporary releases. I also want to mention how nice it was to read anecdotes from folks like the late Imants Krumins—a true fan of the music, a genuinely nice guy and one of the few first generation punks that you would still have been likely to meet at a show. Take what you read with a grain of salt or invest some time in doing research about the general history of Toronto and Hamilton in the late '70s and early '80s. At the end of the day I think that students of punk history or those generally curious about the genesis of the southern Ontario punk scene should read this book.

— Saira Chhibber

MOVIES



WE'RE DESPERATE. GET USED TO IT.

I saw X's documentary **The Unheard Music** at the Nickelodeon Cinema in Boston during its first run in 1986. I think I enjoyed the film. I don't remember not liking it. Still, I never saw it again until now. **The Unheard Music** has been re-released on DVD for its 25th anniversary. Watching it in 2012 seems more revelatory than it did in the '80s. As the saying goes hindsight is 20/20.

The Unheard Music was filmed from 1980 to 1985. It is this period that sees X release its first album *Los Angeles* on Slash Records through the band's early major label years with Elektra. Bits of the band member's daily lives are interspersed with live performances, visualized songs and vintage television and movie clips. These are the formative years of the band. Seeing it all as it happens is the way a documentary should work. Too many modern punk documentaries being released these days have the tendency to look back too nostalgically; missing what it was that made it all exciting. Everything and everyone is too self-important. We're punks. We should be taking the piss out of the past.

X starts off humbly as bassist John Doe and guitarist Billy Zoom end up placing similar ads in the *Recycler* looking to start a band. When each sees the other's ad they immediately recognize a connection. Later Doe meets Exene Cervenka at a poetry workshop and after reading some of her writing invites her to sing for the band even though she has never sang before. They find drummer D.J. Bonebrake after seeing him play with The Eyes at the Masque. The history of the band is somewhat rushed in the film. It is where the band is going that is the focus.

X records four albums with former Doors' keyboard player Ray Manzarek. It may just be Manzarek's more recent activities, but the guy seems like such a joke. Seeing him perform "Soul Kitchen" with X makes me laugh. I wish he would let the Doors' legacy rest for at least a little while.

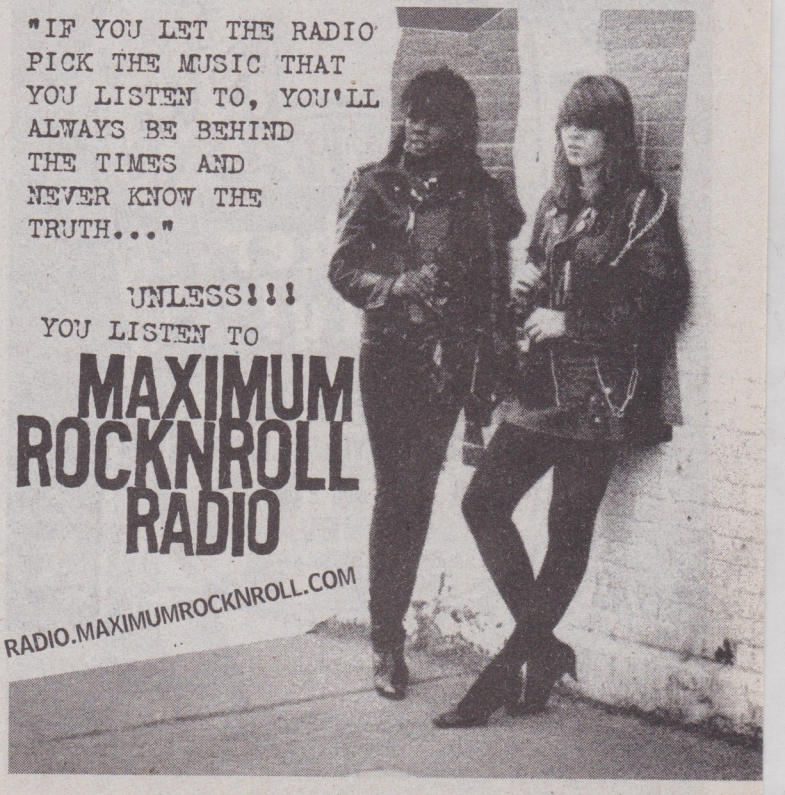
Some of the other entertaining sequences include Jello Biafra appearing on Rodney Bingenheimer's KROQ radio show. Bingenheimer's radio style contrasts with the KCBS DJ who tries to explain that X needs to fit in with Led Zeppelin, Aerosmith, The Who and other rock dinosaurs to get played on his station. Bingenheimer has less rigid specifications. There is also an amazing sequence of a house being moved through the streets of LA at night. It doesn't really have anything to do with X other than being nicely set to one of their songs. But the footage is pretty cool.

It is amusing how sarcastic **The Unheard Music** is. You really need to remember that in 1986 punk was not yet accepted by the mainstream. That kind of attitude that no one will ever take us seriously permeates the film. Everyone seems to be doing whatever she/he wants. There is an air of pretend seriousness. People are aware of the filming, but there is the demeanor that only our friends will end up seeing this film. Brendan Mullen takes the camera on a tour of the remains of the Masque. As he reads some graffiti in the stairway "Hippies go home. Hippies suck." he shrugs, "I guess so." Exene takes the camera on a tour of the Whiskey and reads the bathroom graffiti. "'Fear sucks.' That's a popular one." The ultimate scorn is left for the record labels and radio stations. Al Bergmano of MCA is interviewed. He explains how he doesn't see any commercial possibility in X. He points to bands like Point Blank and Journey as being at the forefront of music at the time. Later when X's album *Wild Gift* is named album of the year by the *LA Times* he suddenly is interested. By that time it is too late. X has signed with Elektra.

The best aspect of **The Unheard Music** is that it captures the band X as they were developing while also documenting Los Angeles at this particular time. I have seen a lot of music documentaries. One of the things that always annoy is the interviewees' attitude that everything was so much better back when they were involved. **The Unheard Music** is not looking back from twenty years in the future. This is what was happening at the time. It may not be the definitive record of the time, but what it shows could never be recreated today. That is endlessly more enjoyable to witness than to listen to some aging punker telling me twenty years later that I should have been there. Even if I was.

The DVD extras include 2011 interviews with John Doe and Exene Cervenka reminiscing about the film. "Those of you who think they know everything are very annoying to those of us who do" Exene recalls the phase written on a small business card tacked to Billy Zoom's door the first time she went to meet him. Also included are a 1983 interview with the four people behind the film production company Angel City, a live outtake of "Some Other Time" and photos of the songbook for **The Unheard Music.** (www.mvdvisual.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com



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THE ABSOLUTES – "Everybody's Feeling Alright" CD

The ABSOLUTES are a four piece from upstate New York who plays garage rock à la the MONKS / SONICS / *Back From the Grave* comps. You know, the bands that were covered in the pages of *MRR* because they sort of laid the foundation for the punk movement at the time they were playing it. Problem with it in 2012 is if you are not adding anything fresh sounding to the formula, then you have the feeling of a revival band (though a quite good one) from an era of music that has only in historical context been catered to in the pages of *MRR*. The ABSOLUTES are a perfectly fine band, but one that probably caters more to the readership of *Ugly Things* then *MRR*. (JF)
(self-released)

AGE OF COLLAPSE – "Burden of Beast" LP

Sprawling, dark hardcore from San Diego. AGE OF COLLAPSE touch on a wide range of influences here: although rooted in modern, epic crust, the pleading vocals and haunting, melodic guitars owe as much to screamo as they do to FROM ASHES RISE or FALL OF EFRAFA. Slow, hypnotic breakdowns give way to faster punk parts that remind me of Spanish heroes MADAME GERMEN, a comparison made all the easier when I occasionally mistook the reverb-drenched guitars for bowed string instruments. This recording sounds absolutely huge, and in all the right ways; it's easy for this kind of music get bogged down under the weight of ambition, but AGE OF COLLAPSE wisely avoid the trap of monotony with a seemingly endless flow of masterfully-placed riffs. Serious without feeling self-indulgent, these songs convey a sense of loss and exasperation that is echoed in muted artwork and bleak, narrative lyrics. (WB)
(Aborted Society)

ALFATEC – CD

This Italian band straight up worships VITAMIN X. With all the great international bands a group could choose to ape, why on earth would anybody settle for VITAMIN X? In case you haven't heard the aforementioned Dutch band, they play hardcore punk with searing, wanky leads reminiscent of '70s rock bands only mouth breathers care about. ALFATEC aren't straight edge, so their lyrical content differs a bit from VITAMIN X, but the musical resemblance is uncanny. They also shot an official video for one of these wretched "songs." Give me a fucking break. (KM)
(self-released)

AMERICAN SUN – "American Sun" EP

Remember BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE? Remember SLUMBER PARTY? This is the middle ground. Maybe even CIRCLE PIT with less sleaze. Maybe with a heavy layer of witchiness. But a definite total worship of classic Americana culture, like the *Easy Rider* chunk of it. This is pretty basic psych rock but not derivative or even boring. It's unchallenging in its straight-forwardness, but entirely entrancing. Harmonies that are slightly off, guitar hooks that are slightly weird. This is real good. (MM)
(self-released)

ANCIENT FILTH – "Too Young (Fuck Adults)" EP

Indignant political punk from Massachusetts. Everything here centers around a classic, mid-tempo approach, but ANCIENT FILTH set themselves apart with heady samples and breakdowns that border on the epic without detracting from the overall sense of immediacy. Vocals are solid throughout, if a bit monotonous, and the lyrics and accompanying explanations are quite brilliant, touching on classic anarcho-punk themes without feeling ever like a rehash. The packaging takes everything to the next level, the vaguely Giger-esque cover art unfolding to reveal an awesomely detailed two-sided poster along with a mysterious drawing of a spiral galaxy that is never quite given proper context. (WB)
(Shock To The System)

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT – "Black Sands" EP

Genre music for genre people, APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT certainly aren't doing any favors to those of us wanting to defend the continuing vitality of the contemporary crust scene against its many, many critics. D-beats, chugging breakdowns and well-worn thrash guitar leads abound throughout, while "The End of Complacency" adds female/male vocal trade-offs to the "incensed dude half-screaming trite lyrics over a slow, forgettable riff" formula that always made me think of BEHIND ENEMY LINES as one of the most over-hyped bands of the new millennium. Definitely the best-sounding release I've heard from

them so far, but this EP is mostly noteworthy for having some of the ugliest, tackiest art in recent memory. (WB)
(Profane Existence)

ARMAGEDOM / TEROKAL – split EP

Oh dang! Classic Brazilian crossover-flavored HC D-beat-driven lo-fi old-schoolers ARMAGEDOM deliver two tracks recognizable in their buzzy metallic riffage, snare attack along with the throaty Portuguese yells. This is their same great sound with some good solid songs to appease the metalleros in the punk scene that like their shit raw and intense. On the flip side we are lucky to get two ragin' tracks from the new Portland band TEROKAL. Their demo ruled and this is even better (especially because you can fucking hear everything). The drums are driving and solid with some flourishes of banged out fills. The bass thumps away at your melon, and in combination with the drums the rhythm section pulls you from the chest in their rapid fire. When the music does slow to mid-tempo you don't get to catch your breath… the beats pound on your chest and the guitars are relentlessly driving. The two guitars are definitely distinct and full with the occasional well-executed solos reminding me that POISON IDEA listened to the same shit this band listens to when they started up. The vocals are my favorite kind of higher pitched scream that is ugly and almost sounds like this dude is intensely complaining about something. Sung in Spanish with some total brutality and urgency. I am really into this dude's style. This all comes together to sound very early Scandi and raw. If you like TÖTALITAR, you will be into this. The one thing that I could have done without is that the record plays from the outside in which may be problematic if you have an auto return on your player, but WTF… this is a damn good record. The fact that you have to handle it some, makes it that much more memorable. The cover is a limited edish really nicely screen printed design with black silver and red paint. There is a copied insert with lyrics Also, there is a big ass poster of the cover! Yay! Check this out! (MB)
(Odio Los Discos)

ARTHUR PYM & THE GORDONS – "Side Mirror of My Mind/Just a Rapper's Delight"

Wow. This is some seriously good music. It's catchy and it's poppy, but it is also rough and raw. I'm not sure why but it reminds me of ROBYN HITCHCOCK, maybe because it's sort of jangly. It's also got some SWELL MAPS action going on, perhaps because it's just a little disjointed in its extreme catchiness. France is still where it's at. These cats hail from Bordeaux. This is Top Ten of 2012 material. (KK)
(Close Up)

LES ASPIRATEURS – "Le Crime (ne paid pas)/La Mer n 2 (Le Coquillage Magique)

I can't ascertain any information on this band whatsoever. Their 45 appears to be self-released, and a derelict MySpace page in French reveals absolutely nothing. Their mystery is fine, since the music alone clearly paints the context for their style, even with the lyrics in an unintelligible language. Neither song contains a single mistake. It is garage rock in the most traditional manner, probably created by journeymen rock 'n' rollers who would rather perform at a party than attend one; social simpletons who couldn't relate to their classmates and found solace in the savage yelps of 1960s frat rock. Their songs definitely betray obvious influences, this isn't groundbreaking music, but in a post-modern musical climate where we are often left to decide who rehashes the past most effectively, I'll take LES ASPIRATEURS. (SL)
(self-released, no info)

BAZOOKA – "Jupiter/Back To You"

Pleasant enough sounding modern garage rock. Not as wimpy as the usual stuff being turned out these days. The music is fuzzy, but with some power and the songs are pretty catchy. However it is hard for me to get past the fact that the vocals sound like the singer is doing a bad imitation of JOHN DWYER. (CK)
(Dusty Medical)

BEAR – "Doradus" CD

What a mess of sounds and ideas from this Belgian band. Simply put this is slick modern metalcore. But it's not that simple. Imagine for a second you took modern, slick and sucky metalcore and merged it with the guitar tone from MESHUGGAH, the big metal sound of GOJIRA and the hardcore/metal pummeling of CONVERGE. I kid you not. I could go on about how bad this is but I'm not going to waste the time. Don't squander your time on this one. (MH)
(Let it Burn)

BEFORE I HANG / FACE ON MARS – split EP

Oh Bruce where are you????? This record makes me think of him laughing at me across the *MRR* compound while I told him this southern redneck rock *succccked*. He lovvvvves this shit, and through him I found a shared love of HAMMERLOCK. BEFORE I HANG are southern redneck rock like ANTISEEN… The flip was a mindbender cos it sounded like fuckin' KYUSS or SLO BURN—tweaked out stoner metal. Not punk at all but I lovvvvve this shit. (TB)
(self-released, no info)

BLACK HUMOR – "Love God – Love One Another" LP

I can still remember buying my first BLACK HUMOR LP. "What the fuck is this?" I thought. Blank black DJ sleeve, the B-Side label with a swastika drawn from crutches. Yes, like other daring collectors I knew in the '90s, I bought it because I recognized the name Fowl records, not as a trademark of quality: I figured I could sell it to someone in Europe. I tried to listen, and, of course, I sold it. I got another copy a few years later, this time with a lyric sheet wheat pasted on the blank DJ cover. I listened again—still didn't really like it, but put it on my speculative hold shelf rather than dumping it for the 20 bucks. A few more years passed, Scott Soriano blogged it and there was a brief internet hubbub about it. At that point I learned about hand painted covers, still never having seen one. I also downloaded MP3s of the album (hey, they were there!). The next couple years I sat at work listening to random shit in iTunes, BLACK HUMOR inevitably ended up in my shuffle, and what can I say, the shit stuck. It's pretty difficult, even for fans of "difficult music." The "singer" yells at the top of his lungs half the time and sounds like a raving hobo the other half, there's a drum machine keeping time for poorly played guitar, bass and tinny keyboards. I've never paid much attention to what he's saying, but I'm pretty sure it is offensive to somebody. Now that I'm converted, I've been on a mission to "upgrade" my painted covers. I remember missing out on a particularly enticing defaced ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA cover. The cover on this reissue is sick, an enlarged colorized version of their iconic Reagan Popé on a Nazi-fied American flag sticker. There are also two inserts of lyrics photos info and some hilarious back and forth banter regarding this album in *MRR* circa 1982. I promise, someday, you will be ready for this. (GB)
(Superior Viaduct)

THE BLANK FIGHT – "House Band Feud" LP

I feel like the best way to explain the sound of the BLANK FIGHT is simply to say that Aaron Cometbus played drums, Rymodee played guitar and harmonica, and the entire band was from Pensacola. They have the unmistakable quality of being a COMETBUS band, but they are dishing it out with a distinct region rock flavor. This LP collects all of the tracks on their previous releases (all fourteen of the songs on their Plan-It-X CD and their one comp track). For those interested in such things, this collection stands as an interesting jumping off point for Rymodee's THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB, an inescapable point of comparison. If you like the work of either of the aforementioned gentlemen, this record is worth your time. (LP)
(Silver Sprocket)

BLOODY HAMMER – "When In Rome" EP

Here we have yet another EP from a one-man band–and much like MAJOR DAMAGE or TINO VALPA–it's meat and potatoes punk rock. BLOODY HAMMER blurs the line between straightforward '80s hardcore and street punk, and while some of the simplistically catchy songs appeal to the sixteen year old pogo punk

in me, overall this record is just too mundane to warrant repeated plays. Advice for this guy; get a band together and aim a bit higher with your next project. (KM)
(Batshit)

BLOODY PHOENIX / QUESTION – split EP

LA's BLOODY PHOENIX dish out grinding crust a la the 1990s, when crust was king, and it seemed like even the mediocre bands were life affirming. Amongst that company, BLOODY PHOENIX would have reigned supreme, but through these ears bludgeoned by scathing grind/crust assaults spanning three decades (yeah, I know there are crust bands spanning four decades, but I'm not going to try to toot my own horn and say I was there in the '80s, because I wasn't—I was in Oklahoma), BLOODY PHOENIX do not simply reign supreme, they change the fukkn game. Essential and unrelenting jams. And speaking of essential, QUESTION harness all of the fury of '80s Finland and speed the train up to destruction. I am shamelessly biased – QUESTION are one of the killer-est live bands I've ever seen, and their naked power is impossible to shake while listening to these admittedly raw tracks. Perhaps it's even too raw to properly convey their particularly brilliant version of awesome, but if you like fast, honest, and raw, then you can arguably do no netter than QUESTION. Essential jams from both bands. (WN)
(Six Weeks)

THE BLOWOUTS – "Disposable" EP

This is another one of those bands that smacks of STITCHES or BRIEFS influences. That in itself is not a bad thing, but sometimes it runs the risk of falling flat and being dull. Luckily that is not the case for the BLOWOUTS. Even though their sound doesn't stand out as unique or memorable, their songs *do* stand up on their own and makes for a strong EP here. They'd probably be a blast to see live, which is the way I felt about the aforementioned bands of influence anyways—mostly background music, sort of a soundtrack to the party!! (ML)
(Batshit)

BLUE CROSS – "Mass Hysteria" LP

Think of the most angular moments of SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, or maybe the more melodic moments of ERASE ERRATA. But then more boring and too long. I mean, this isn't necessarily bad, just kind of bland and kind of one trick and then rambling. (MM)
(Shogun)

THE BORN UGLYS – "Pictures of Ugly Babies Sell Records" EP

Featuring members of GRIMPLE, WORD SALAD, and CROSS STITCHED EYES. It's on the poppier side of those bands, with sing-a-long crusty gutter punk choruses. The vocals are done by a great crusty gremlin vocalist that I wish was named Spit with a dog named Space Bag. Good shit. (RO)
(Prank)

BOY DIVISION – "Pet Sounds" EP

BOY DIVISION does a bunch of covers of tunes about animals, which I would've hated on principle a month ago, but since I'm a new pet owner, we can file this under Cutesy-Wootsy. Covers of the CRAMPS, PRINCE, the CURE and other bullshit. Six songs, all terrible. Fetch, dipshit. (MC)
(Fidel Bastro)

BRAIN SLUG – "Gag Reflex" EP

It seems like it's only been in recent years that, say, LIP CREAM and the CRO-MAGS have shared a fanbase outside of fanatics or record collectors, and I'd wager that this band is made up of fans of both. This is how to do (mostly) mid-paced hardcore right: get some bleak, frustrated riffs that are simple but drive the point home, belt that shit out with some pounding but cymbal-heavy drums, and throw in burly yet grating vocals with a nice fuzz over everything. I don't know what recording with Don Fury is like these days, but he evidently got a good sound for this band as well. (DG)
(Hardware)

BRAINWRECK / DAWN – split EP

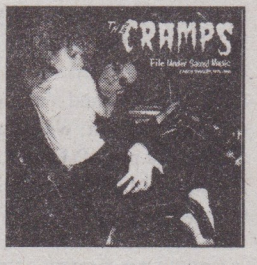
This record smells weird. I can't quite place it; it's like an herbal potpourri with a hint of incense and charred flowers or something. I don't know what the idea was, sending me some kind of Bed Bath and Beyond record but you fucks are lucky I'm not allergic to this shit. They are also lucky that both bands are hella good. Both of them do raw and noisy hardcore punk of the fast and aggressive persuasion. I'm stoked on BRAINWRECK's powerviolencey vibe and how all their songs were blasters. DAWN is a bit more doomed out and sludgy in parts and when it gets fast, it is a little less straightforward. Those dudes are probably kind of weird. I have a feeling it was their idea to make the record smell like a head shop. (BL)
(Meat Cube/Anti-Corp)

BRIGHT IDEAS – "Saturdays and the Turning Tide" LP

You may already be familiar with the guitar work and voice on this record if you are a fan of Sacramento band, NAR. It's possible you have even seen the guitarist playing drums in the BANANAS, but BRIGHT IDEAS are a little more laid back and less frenetic than either of those two bands. They take the lo-fi, power-pop approach of NAR and filter it through a true love of the best indie-pop. Something about it reminds me of that old '90s band the WALKABOUTS, but I find this to be more engaging and catchy. Their song, "Falling Down" is my favorite on here and seems like it would sound perfect being blasted out of a boom box strapped a bike being ridden down a lonely road in the summertime. If you're anything like me and you miss the late-'90s onslaught of perfect nerdy pop that once flowed out of the Sacramento area like water, be sure to pick this up as soon as possible. File it under "lazy summer day" listening. (GH)
(Squirmy)

BUCK GOOTER – "Consider the Grackles" LP

This is ugly. Dirty, throbbing, nasty and plodding ugliness. I immediately thought KILLDOZER meets BIG BLACK. Then I hit the third track on side A, "Cats are Cool," which is some sort of bastard blues, and while the lyrics seem like they could be a metaphor, I think it is really about his cat Malcolm. It's sung a bit goofy which lightens up the ugliness of the rest of the release. "Can't Stand the Light" has more of a minimal sound with actual singing. "She Sees Only Flowers" returns to the slow ugliness and in this case slightly industrial sounds of BIG BLACK. The B-side has another goofy track, this time about skunks; "Skunks are Cool." "Straight to Hell" is such an odd one. The plodding nastiness of KILLDOZER, some noisy elec-



tronics and a vague gospel feel in the vocals singing "Hey Lord, Take Me up to Heaven / Cause we're headed straight to hell." Haven't heard anything that sounds like BUCK GOOTER in a long time and I'm enjoying it. (MH)
(Kreephaus)

BY THE THROAT – CD

Boston (yes, Boston) skate punk that brings to mind later JFA (when they started sucking). This is so awful I thought BY THE THROAT was a joke band at first. They aren't. It's cool to write cheesy songs about skating when you're young thrashers just scribbling about your surroundings, but these guys are way too old for this type of drivel. Recommended for simpletons who skate during the day and drink in sports bars at night. (KM)
(self-released)

CARBURETOR DUNG "Inginku Rejam Raksasa Kejam!" 10"

Malaysia's CARBURETOR DUNG has existed since the early 1990s, releasing two cassette albums, a 7" EP and other recordings, so this is their first long overdue step into a larger vinyl release. Despite the band's age, there's a real immediate freshness to the sound of the eight tracks here, partly from the live tracking—which was done at two shows in 2007, then remixed in 2009 and mastered last year, making for a full and resounding recording. There's no audience noise, and the roughness around the edges is something bands try to meticulously create now, as opposed to this, which is basically similar to the one-take near-live recordings of the early 1980s. The music here is solidly great upbeat punk that verges into and then pulls back and forth from hardcore intensity with great dexterity. Using the advantage of two guitarists to layer some great very '80s early So-Cal punk style moments, where it's undeniably aggressive but still retains threads of melody. Straight forward yet inventive, the final track is a melodic sing-a-long in English with bleak lyrics and is reminiscent of the scruffy GRIMPLE or early LOGICAL NONSENSE melody with caustic yet clearly shouted vocals. Lyrics are a great reflection of the band's immediate political and social environment, with English translations and also really pure P-U-N-K lyrics about personal freedom and individuality. Great release! (KS)
(F.A.M.E.D.)

CATHOLIC BOYS – "Psychic Voodoo Control Zombies" LP

Fifteen tracks of spazzed out punk rock from the heartlands of Wisconsin. Punk garage instead of that much-used moniker garage punk. Taking in some of that weird vibe that is usually found in the dirtier corners of Chicago, whilst mixing in some sweet ol' California Rip-Off records sleaze. Reckless without tumbling down the stairs, rocking without any air guitar irony, and trashy minus the '60s worship. Fifteen tunes that clock in at around twenty minutes; now that's punk. Originally released in 2003, this being the remastered new edition. (SD)
(HSBF/Dusty Medical)

CLASSICS OF LOVE – CD

While I was listening to the first song on this disc, I thought to myself, "Oh, this is cool." Unfortunately, as soon as the band dropped into the second song, a ska track, all I could think was, "This isn't as good as OP IVY." These songs are pretty straightforward East-Bay pop punk meets melodic hardcore. Jesse's voice sounds as strong as ever, and he sings plenty of great melodic lines. But there are also moments that seem kinda boneheaded, like the finger tapping guitar solo on "World of the Known." The tunes are solid, but ultimately the record suffers because nothing feels like a fresh new idea. But, if you wanted a new poppy, melodic punk record to hear, you could do far, far worse than this release. (LP)
(Asian Man)

COLD HEART RE-PRESS – "Escaping The Doldrums" CD

You know, I guess I didn't even realize that people were still making this kind of music. COLD HEART RE-PRESS (unusual name) appears to be the work of one man, but he somehow manages to perform polished, overproduced "melodic rock" in the vein of later BAD RELIGION or PENNYWISE but even less punk. I don't even really have a current frame of reference for this material, but if the Warped Tour is your idea of a good time, this is probably for you, I guess? (AM)
(self-released)

THE CONSUMERS – "All My Friends Are Dead" LP

Holy Fucking Shit!!! I get to review one of my favorite records of all time. In The Red Records does this shitty world a great service and gives us a deluxe gatefold sleeve reissue of this soundtrack for violence and self destruction. From the armpit of the world known as Phoenix, Arizona. You can feel the venom and hate of what it must have been like to play this kind of music in 1977 in such a place. They feature one of the greatest punk rock guitar players of all time, Paul Cutler, who went on to found 45 GRAVE using some of these songs. You can't listen to this without smashing something or hurting someone or yourself. It's for real punk rock in its most nihilistic form. "I kill for Jesus / I kill for Christ / I kill for God and the right to survive." (RO)
(In The Red)

THE COPPER GAMINS – CD

The COPPER GAMINS sound exactly like the WHITE STRIPES. They are a two piece. Two of the five songs on this CD are covers of old blues songs. I am undecided whether I should be annoyed or just pity the band. It is one thing to like a band so much their music influences yours. If that is the case you really should be creatively leaving your own mark on the style. Use your fandom as a jumping board to concoct your own thing. This band have yet to do that. (CK)
(self-released)

CRIMSON SCARLET – "Sanctuary/Two Kinds of Red"

This EP is well crafted and beautifully done. From the foldout poster to the final mixing of this record, I'm extremely impressed. This band is a forerunner in the seemingly non-existent Bay Area post-punk/goth scene. Yes, raw punx turned goth seems to be the trend du jour, but it ain't like that with this band. CRIMSON SCARLET is comprised of members of DESPERATE HOURS, MUNDO MUERTO, and MIDNIGHT BRAIN to name a few, so you know they're coming from a solid place in this up and coming (raw) punk scene here in the Bay. They're like a mix of SIOUXSIE meets MORAL HEX with a SISTERS OF MERCY vibe due to their drum machine. The A-side is their strongest side and is more punk in nature versus the B-side, which is slower and more melodic. I recommend you pick up this release as it's a snapshot of a thriving punk scene here that is about to burst forth with vengeance upon all ye punx. (AE)
(Cool Summer)

MIKAL CRONIN – "Tide/You Gotta Have Someone"

One nice thing about this record is that it doesn't readily lend itself to being over analyzed and deconstructed—it just sounds good and it all comes together so well that the songs seem deceptively simple. MIKEL CRONIN of CHARLIE AND THE MOONHEARTS plays beachy garage pop that's instantly catchy without sounding generic or contrived. The B-side is straight up beach pop that seems to be about the honeymoon phase of meeting being in a relationship. The A side is a little more rocking and has a simple catchy lead that repeats throughout the verses, but I can't make out the lyrics. The songs gel well enough that they're more interesting in and of themselves than breaking down the tone of the instruments or the manipulation of the guitar sound on the psychedelic solos. I think most people reading this will be familiar with the Goner catalogue and will probably already know whether or not they want to check this out. I really enjoyed this. (P$)
(Goner)

CROP FAILURE – "Crop Failure" LP

For being such a jumbled mess this record is fairly coherent. At first listen there's a certain confusion, is this hardcore, math rock, indie? Well, no not really any of those. It's sort of a weird pop record with elements of all kinds of music (though, really mostly from the punk world). The first couple songs have a pretty

heavy hardcore influence, like the late '80s/early '90s Dischord stuff, but with the addition of some guitar work that sounds like math rock without the odd time signatures. As the record goes on, it falls more into the realm of noisy punk pop songs, reminiscent of BISYBACKSON, with the music getting catchier and the vocals becoming more sung. Give it a couple listens, it'll grow on you. (PA)
(Retired)

THE CRYPTKEEPER FIVE – "The Unbeatable Cry" CD

What the fuck is this whiney indie rock crap!?! I don't know why anyone one who listens to this would read this magazine, but lucky me I get to review it. Not punk except for some of the upbeat numbers that have a sing a long Oi! or more likely an ANDREW WK feel to them. It's fucking long, full of wimpy ballads, and has about a dozen singers, a sax player, piano, viola, accordion, organ and they still can't write a decent song. God. I can't even describe how bad this is. Read about them in some slick color indie rock magazine that you can jack off all over the pictures. Fuck Off! (RO)
(Pure White)

CURMUDGEON – "Human Ouroboros" EP

Burly, down-tuned metallic hardcore that likely draws from equal parts early grind and sludgy metal. There are a lot of abrupt tempo changes, often from moody, atmospheric half-speed grooves to blastbeats and back again, with some mid-paced parts here and there, and many songs paradoxically ending with an abrupt chord ringing out. The production is great: big without being too polished, and the reverb on the drums works well. The vocalist was in RIP-SHIT and UNPERSON and has a distinguishable voice ala INFEST, and her intelligent lyrics take on humanity, machismo, stupidity (alcohol-fueled and otherwise), gender oppression, and other bullshit aspects of modern life. (DG)
(Nervous Nelly)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "Pow! That's Killmusik. Volume Two" CD

I reviewed Vol. One in this series a year or two back. This is another collection of split 7"s, with some new songs as well. The band still trades in, at best, adequate rock music. The songs tend to be dull and overlong. But it's their two songs demonizing immigrants which made me loathe this band. They complain England needs a more repressive border patrol and more deportations. To the band I say, eat shit, pigs, fuck you, die. (JM)
(self-released)

DIE LAST – "Marzenia Zdesperowanych Romantykow" LP

My first impression of this is that it is total *Mush*-era LEATHERFACE worship. The guy's voice is a dead giveaway for Frankie Stubbs, but he's singing in Polish (?). If this is your thing, they're really good at it. Sometimes, they mix it up and slip in some metalcore throwdown parts along with some late-era emo to keep you on your toes, but they stick close to the LEATHERFACE formula that was crafted for them so many years ago by the original band. I'm not saying this is bad, because it isn't, but if I wanted to listen to LEATHERFACE, I would listen to *Mush*. That's all I really need. (GH)
(No Pasaran)

DISTURD – "Isolation..." EP

Finally! I've been waiting for this EP for a seemingly interminable period, as delay after delay plagued its release. DISTURD have been kicking around since at least 2003, when they provided the standout tracks on *The Darkest 4* live comp tape, and have only popped up occasionally since then, most recently with a couple killer tracks on the *Hardcore Inferno* comp. LP. Personally, I very much miss the mid-late '00s stenchcore revival, a time when bands like STORMCROW, LIMB FROM LIMB and SANCTUM were cranking out heavy crust records that equaled or surpassed the material of the bands that inspired them. Those bands may be gone, but DISTURD remain, cranking out stripped-down metallic crust that pours on the catchy riffs without ever becoming too busy for its own good. There's also a clear S.D.S. influence at play, though without the occasional quirkiness that band indulged in. The B-side's "Master" is as epic a track as this style has produced. Black denim-clad legion, meet your new favorite band. (AU)
(Blackwater)

DOT DASH – "Spark>Flame>Ember>Ash" CD

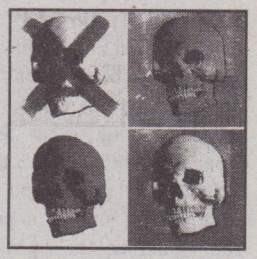
From the name of this band, I was rubbing my hands in excitement that I might be settling in for an album of WIRE worship. To my disappointment, DOT DASH are in fact a pretty wimpy indie pop band, lacking the edge of even the cleanest, poppiest COLIN NEWMAN solo material. This combo of DC veterans certainly know how to pen a catchy tune, but the crisp, almost emotionless production renders the songs insipid. I'm not generally a fan of distortion pedals and the like, but a little mud around the edges or some fuzz on the tape could have given this album a little more life. Probably a decent live proposition, but found wanting on record. (AM)
(The Beautiful Music)

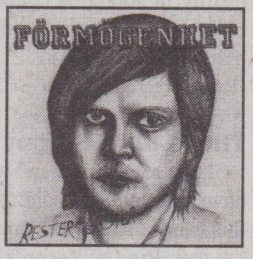
ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU – LP

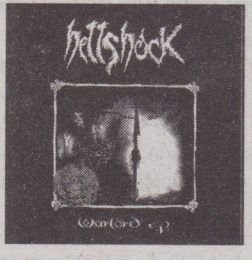
ELECTRIC MANCHAKOU is the sort of band that's lost in time and space, but springs forth so fucking powerfully after the fact that they manage to come off mystical and otherworldly. They're my new obsession, thanks in large part to this essential reissue. How exactly does a band this fucking good go under the radar for so fucking long? While they practiced their incredible STOOGES-fixated rock in London in the late '80s/early '90s, they remain mostly a mystery, easily one of the best "lost" bands of the era. Thankfully, I can now blitz my brains with this collection. So impressive, punk and vital. Unreal!!! (MC)
(Memoire Neuve)

EVACUATE – "2012" LP

By the numbers politically charged high energy punk. The production and presentation are top notch, but this is too slick for my taste and comes off contrived. It sounds like AVENGED SEVENFOLD got a grip of BEHIND ENEMY LINES and BLITZ records and went nuts. I'm trying to get into this, but every time I think I'm on board the double kick drum and needless guitar solos kick my ass right out the door and back to my raw, unpolished and incompetent musicians creating sounds that do *not* sound contrived and fake. Sorry dudes, the politics are right on and I hope your hearts are in the right place, but this screams "Sunset Strip sleaze meets UK punk uniform" to me, and it sounds empty. (WN)
(Voltage)







THE FAB MODS – LP

The easiest thing to say about this band is that they want to be the French JAM. That is overly simplistic, but the first song coulda been a long-lost JAM song, other than the heavy, heavy French accent! Overall, the FAB MODS are a little rougher, gruffer and tougher sounding than the JAM, so maybe a more accurate description would be the JAM meets SECRET AFFAIR meets CAMERA SILENS or WEST SIDE BOYS... However you wanna look at it, if you are a fan of French Oi! and skinhead subculture, then you should definitely check this band out, cus they are really good! (ML)
(Close Up)

FAG COP – "Whimpers from the Pantheon" LP

No-Fi, trashy, punk with whiny vocals that'll have you snorting lines off someone else's cock. Recorded on various boom boxes and slapped onto this piece of wax which explains the varied quality in sound. A couple of these tracks will most definitely enhance the rage at any eviction party. Have fun. (MS)
(Rank Toy)

THE FLIPTOPS – "Are Still A Band" LP

They're still around thirteen years later. I have to admit that I didn't quite remember what this band sounded like after not hearing anything but their Rip Off Records debut way back when. They feature members from the MINDS, who were one of the best live bands I've seen. It's sugary slightly power popish punk that's not wimpy, with tough guitars that'll make you want to smash stuff. Slap a tape of this in a boom box and head to the beach with a 40 ouncer and a bag of glue. You get the idea. Fans of the EXPLODING HEARTS, MINDS and some Rip Off Records bands will dig this. The back claims that this record is guaranteed to get you laid (!) so how can you go wrong? (RO)
(Bachelor)

FLOWERS FOR WHORES/GATTACA – split EP

I had never heard of either of these bands but was blown away by FLOWERS FOR WHORES. Their side was brutal dark hardcore with stompy aggression and discordant melodies. I like the gang vocals and the ominously huge bass tone, it gives the music more swagger without any trite toughness. There is only one track on each side and FLOWERS FOR WHORES spends a lot of time building the song up and then breaking it down and the changes let them cram a lot of shred in there. The GATTACA side was good too; they're a little less ugly but doing a similar thing to the other side of the disc. This is more of a straightforward hardcore band, less of the dark and sludgy feel in its crust influence, using a more melodic approach. Both bands are worth a listen. (BL)
(Damage Done)

FNU RONNIES – "Saddle Up" LP

Never before have I given this band a chance. This is real fucking weird. Manic energy to the point of twitching. Vocals sounding like a zombie FRED SCHNEIDER or possibly JELLO BIAFRA basking in a mile high pile of speed. And fucking unrelenting. This is that one scene in *Valley Girl* where they ditch the valley party and go to a club in Hollywood and the PLIMSOULS are playing but only if that whole scene was actually happening in the nether world from *Beetlejuice*. Jeez, I'm glad I finally caught the net. (MM)
(Load)

FÖRMÖGENHET – "Rester Med Gäster" EP

These Swedes have graced us with a good hardcore EP. Ten songs, very little bullshit, a little catchy on the shouted chorus, quick riffing, yelled to shrieked vocals. Everything's in Swedish, I think there are explanations instead of lyrics. Only 100 were made so email now if you want one. The record is on white vinyl, which is the worst color. Only black is good. (JM)
(Jonassons Grabb)

THE GAGGERS – "Two Fingers Down My Throat/Gimme No Love"

This is so reminiscent of the SEX PISTOLS I almost can't focus. And if isn't the SEX PISTOLS, then it's the STITCHES. My god, is this catchy. Okay, so maybe this isn't the most original 7" ever released, or even released this week, but man is it good. Loud, snotty, catchy punk rock. I'm going to have to hunt this one down. One seven inch, played at 45rpm, with two songs, this is just the way things were meant to be. Leave me alone; I'm in my happy place. (KK)
(Batshit)

GENTLEMAN JESSE – "Leaving Atlanta" CD

A much-welcomed second LP form Atlanta's much battered but certainly not down GENTLEMAN JESSE. One part power pop, one part SPRINGSTEEN, one part ELVIS COSTELLO all rounded of with a nice sprinkle of the CLASH and a subtle hint of TELEVISION. Some good ol' Americana comes shining through, whilst the song writing wins from some serious life experience incidents and their aftermath. Up there with the song writing quality of GREG CARTWRIGHT and PAUL COLLINS. Great. (SD)
(Douchemaster)

THE GRAINS – "Stone Street" LP

My free association line of notes for this record that I wrote during the first few tracks is as follows: JOEL PLASKETT, WINGNUT DISHWASHERS UNION, SPOONBOY, indie roots rock, JACK WHITE. I don't want to let y'all see behind the curtain too much, but that just made me giggle, so I thought I'd share. I feel the tag of indie roots rock works best, as they seem to be flitting between highly accessible indie rock and highly accessible roots music. It's all very poppy, with a slight country/southern rock twist (too bad these guys are fuckin' Yankees from goddamn New Brunswick). Also, one of their singers is pretty bad, and it's really a bummer. This record is basically inoffensive (second singer aside), but readers of this magazine are probably looking for *punk* records, and this one isn't punk at all. (LP)
(Psychic Volt)

GRIND THE ENEMY / WAR/SYSTEM – split CD

Metallic English punk from WAR/SYSTEM, too much mid tempo makes it difficult for this guy to really enjoy the good bits, but they seem to be going for a late '80s DEVIATED INSTINCT vibe with mixed results. GRIND THE ENEMY is not grind at all, slow and dirgy metal crust jams. Churning and distorted guttural romps with truly hesh guitar work. Two groups of mature crusters plying their wares. (WN)
(Angry Scenes Angry / 83)

GUILTY PLEASURES – "Summer Strange" LP

There was a time a time when Midwest punk was fuckking dangerous... bands like the BRIDES, PROBLEMATICS, CLONE DEFECTS, PIRANHAS and the fledgling *Horizontal Action* fanzine were scaring the living shit out of the punk rock squares by doing more drugs, fighting more and looking like a bunch of fucking glammed out smackhead rock 'n' rollers. The GUILTY PLEASURES were right there; this their long lost LP is a classic slice of Midwest swagger. The STITCHES mixed with the DEAD BOYS but with an almost psych goth weirdness. It's twisted for sure and punk as fuck. They probably cut themselves on stage. (TB)
(Dusty Medical)

GUTRENCH – "Ironside Anthems" CD

Here's another '90s NYHC-revival act for all the karate moshers out there. The songs are pretty straightforward, the vocals are throat-y and oi-inspired, and luckily for me they don't go too heavy on the breakdowns. If I were directing a dumb movie, this is the music that would be playing when the jock-bros arrive to ruin the party. (JH)
(self-released)

HANNA HIRSCH – "Ga Hem Over Himlen" LP

The female vocalist in this Swedish quintet cultivates a fiery, impassioned tone which the rest of the players successfully accentuate. The organ instills a particularly lofty ambiance, and the clean guitar carries intelligible chord structures that create an understated pop sensibility. Catchiness is present, but the group isn't strictly

relying on bubblegum appeal. The most syrupy passages are usually followed by a harrowing or temperamental bridge, which makes it difficult music to ignore, in the best sense. The vocalist *sings*, but she isn't spot on, and her tonal shortcomings cultivate a sense of earnestness. I only hope that the lyrics aren't too self-indulgent, but my Swedish isn't keen enough to glean any substantial meaning. (SL)
(Adagio830)

HEAD ON ELECTRIC – "Sleep Slaughter Sheep" LP

Most punk bands have a sort of single sound. They play thrash or they play pop punk or they play traditional punk or whatever. Once in a while a punk band comes along that branches out from being so focused. From Milwaukee, HEAD ON ELECTRIC is one of those bands, or at least *Sleep Slaughter Sheep* is one of those records. It makes for a good record, but one that is also tough to review, as you can't just pigeonhole it. This record is garagey and fuzzed out, but it's also very catchy. At times is sort of HÜSKER DÜ-ish, other times it's almost folky. The sound is real heavy, except when it's clean and soft. This may be one of those records that people end up calling "important." (KK)
(Dusty Medical)

HELLSHOCK – "Warlord" EP

Originally released in 2006, 300 copies of this EP have been repressed in order to fill the leftover covers. I haven't followed HELLSHOCK very much previously, and haven't heard them in a long time, so this is a nice reintroduction. I recall them slaying live. Two raging hardcore tunes, recorded a bit thin, but they make up for it with some well-written songs. I like when crust bands don't need to rely on being heavy as shit, and HELLSHOCK have that in their favor on this 7". You already know that HELLSHOCK are top tier of this style, and if you need this. (MA)
(Profane Existence)

HERMANOS DE LA MENTE FURIOSA – "Armonizando La Rabia" CD

This is some solid melodic hardcore from Argentina with strong AVAIL and STRIKE ANYWHERE vibes, though there's a pinch more metal in their sound than those bands. Like STRIKE ANYWHERE, they're heavy on the politics, and the CD includes a huge fold-out newsprint insert with lyrics and thoughtful song explanations in four languages. This kind of music isn't my usual cup of tea, but their hearts are in the right place and this is better than 90% of the stuff I've heard in this style. Definitely worth checking out. (AU)
(Catalina / Discos Del Sembrador / Rosa Negra / Joven Hasta Morir / Para Tod@s / Revoluciona Tu Mente)

HIDING INSIDE VICTIMS / SUICIDE STATE – split EP

Southern California's HIDING INSIDE VICTIMS' two tracks are metal-riffed crust-core with hoarse vocal trade offs shouting Cimmerian lyrics about environmental devastation and the collapse of empires. Complex post-DYSTOPIA / FROM ASHES RISE riff-fest similar to the AWAKENING, with squealing guitar solos, moody riffage and pick slides over drum driven breakdowns bookending straight ahead hardcore charge. Holland's SUICIDE STATE plunk out more simplistic hardcore with INFAME / X-CRETA styled throat gargling, which works best when laid over the faster speed they pick up towards the end of their three tracks. The one lyric presented seems to concern the destruction of diseased factory farmed animals, though there's a link to fucking Facebook to read more lyrics. Uh, no. That's not how it works. The only point to make a record now is as a concrete document of the culture. If you can't be bothered to make a decent product/ document, leave your entire existence as a band *on facebook*, where it can be deleted with as little thought as you're seemingly willingly put into it. Outside of that, pretty solid and balanced EP with CIVILIZED SOCIETY / NAPALM DEATH-ish pen scrawled cover, photos of oil covered birds, exploding oil rigs, and a Noam Chomsky outro. (KS)
(Selfish Satan)

HIGH DIVE – CD

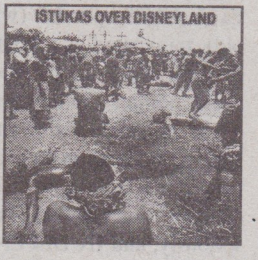
HIGH DIVE's main (and possibly only) songwriter, Ryan Woods, also, plays and writes songs in DEFIANCE, OHIO, and the songs definitely reflect that. As someone who likes the aforementioned band, I was excited to hear this record. The songs on this record are highly reminiscent of the songs that Ryan wrote for DEFIANCE, OHIO, but with a distinct lean towards pop punk and away from folk punk (read: no cellos or other acoustic instruments). Also, this record is super sappy. Ultimately, the songs are well crafted and heartfelt, and I would recommend this to anyone who wanted an antidote to bro-y party oriented pop punk (take that, 18th generation D4 rip offs!). Also, a TIFFANY/TOMMY JAMES & THE SHONDELLS cover. (LP)
(No Idea)

HUMOUSEXUAL – "Meaning to These Maps" EP

If BILLY BRAGG is folk music, then this is folk punk. Seriously. With the spare arrangements (most of the songs are just vocals, electric guitar and very simple/spare drums) and songs about picking nettles for soup and wanting a boyfriend who likes camping and the outdoors, this both embraces and shies away from the conventions of folk punk. The vocals have a very British sound to them, reminding me both of BILLY BRAGG and the first TELEVISION PERSONALITIES record, and the melodic singing works well to fill in all the spaces left by the lack of lush instrumentation. The songs on this record are pleasant and charming, and worth your time if you don't consider cheesy lyrics a cardinal sin. (LP)
(Everard)

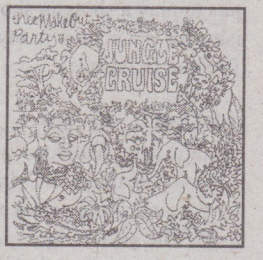
HUSKY DUDES – "Hollow Human" EP

First release by this Austin band is a cool effort, although it could totally benefit from a little more bite in the recording. This is my second listen to this EP and there are some decent moments "Destroy my Kind" is a pretty rad song. Nice start, not a fan of the soundbites. (MS)
(Bombay Cove)



THE INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND – "(Watch Out) Thief/You Belong To Me"

I do believe that this is the third re-issue of an old KIDDA BAND single, and I say keep them coming. If you ain't familiar, these English cats were one of the best '70s power pop/glam mullet punks around in that era. The early material, (which this is) definitely weighs more heavily on the glam side, whilst later the band starts to make its way towards the '79 Mod revival sound. Pure quality all around, this band deserved to be big, but for one of those unexplained reasons never managed to make it to



the same heights of the CHORDS, the JAM or JOE JACKSON. If you wanna know where your GENTLEMAN JESSE, the STATUES and a slew of others stole their sound from I suggest no better place to start. (SD)
(Black and Blue / Last Laugh)

IN DEFENCE – "Don't Know How to Breakdance." LP

This is the third time this record has been issued in the last four or five years (second time for vinyl). The first song blatantly steals its title from that of that JUDGE record that was recorded by the guy who recorded RUN DMC and Hip Hop Republican LL COOL J, and blatantly steals its chorus from a MUNICIPAL WASTE song. Other than that, these are possibly the most self-referential lyrics I've ever heard, with virtually every song being about shows and the scene and, barring that, food. Even if I were attempting to write a parody of a pizza thrash (excuse me, "taco thrash") band putting out a record on Profane Existence, I couldn't come up with lines like "Homophobia makes me pissed/it did not end with Limp Wrist," with my solution being to "call more gay dudes" who would point "errect (sic) fingers in the air" as they piled on top of each other in the pit. White men can't jump, and straight men can't write "Cruising at the Show." With that said, this band has accomplished the near-impossible of writing a straightforward hardcore LP that holds my attention the entire way through. Both lyrically and musically, it's sort of like the MUNICIPAL WASTE/CRUCIAL UNIT split LP (which is now a decade old), reinvented as a youth crew record, and/or the first R.A.M.B.O. record without the anarchist "politics" and with a better understanding of the early Revelation catalog. And despite the ridiculous antics described above, I will always take a band that doesn't take themselves too seriously over one that takes themselves entirely too seriously, and IN DEFENCE at least take their music seriously enough to write quality songs. They also deliver live, and any band with the guts to play a shotgun show at a fast food establishment is a winner in my book. (DG)
(Profane Existence)

INFÄME – "III" EP

Galloping hardcore punk from Barcelona. I sense Japanese HC influence in the over-the-top and burly vocal style, and nifty guitar leads. The guitars have a warm overdrive tone to them instead of the overrated metal-tinged sound so many bands have. They encompass a similar melody style to TRAGEDY, but are not as heavy overall. INFÄME are more on the punk end of the spectrum. My fave track on here is "Funerales"—a great mid-paced, hook-laden fist pumper. The cover is adorned with a drawing of a punker-skull biting down on a rat, while other rats look on and hiss at him. Looks like my buddy Tete plays bass on this—you may recall him from ETACARINAE, DESTINO FINAL or BELGRADO. Good stuff here. (MA)
(Angry Voice / Grita O Muere)

IN RUINS – "Lifeless" LP

Unapologetically grim and apocalyptic, IN RUINS show you don't need to reinvent the wheel to put out a worthy punk record in the year 2012 (ok, this came out in 2011, but you get the point). I know I roll my eyes every time I see a lazy reviewer comparing a crust band to TRAGEDY, so you'll just have to trust me when I say that the galloping, melodic dual guitars make that actually merited in this case. This record doesn't have the most memorable hooks, but when they get ripping IN RUINS is right up there with WOLFBRIGADE and other obvious forbearers. It certainly doesn't hurt that these guys are *shredders* and clearly had a lot of fun writing these interwoven guitar leads, though I will say the palm-muted chugs that pop up every once in a while reminded me way too much of metalcore. Vocals are gritty and perfect, and the drumming is supremely solid throughout with enough tricks thrown in to keep things interesting. Definitely worth picking up, I'm expecting even bigger things from this band in the future. (WB)
(Anti-Corporate)

ISTUKAS OVER DISNEYLAND / R.A.B. – split EP

ISTUKAS OVER DISNEYLAND are a very long-running band (since '94!) and are practically an institution in their native Philippines, but I've never cared much for their brand of basic melodic hardcore, and there's not much to change my mind here. This is one of those splits where each band covers a song of the other's and in this case I actually like their cover better than the original. For those who haven't heard them, ISTUKAS play a kind of slowed-down GOOD RIDDANCE or FACE TO FACE style. France's R.A.B. are more of the same, but as opposed to just not being my thing they're actively bad. Like, your first high school band's second rehearsal-type bad. I'm all for incompetently performed punk as long as it has some kind of verve or passion, but this is just flat, badly written junk memorable only for its awfulness. ISTUKAS deserve your support, but track down one of their CDs or the ESKAPO split if you're interested in them. (AU)
(MAC/Love From Hate/Rusty Knife /Fuck Your Laws/FFC/Has Been Mental)

KIDS OF ZOO – LP

KIDS OF ZOO are an interesting band from Melbourne, Australia. Musically they've got that MINUTEMEN kind of jazz thing going on. The songs are somewhat disjointed and unsettling, but powerful and catchy. The vocals sound post-punky with a cold, robotic style. Combined together it sounds futuristic and retro. If they polished their sound up, I bet they could be all over "alternative" radio. Personally, I hope they don't. I prefer my music this dirty. Cool stuff. (CK)
(Adagio 830)

KONKURSSI – "Six Pack" EP

Like all proper raw punk lovers, I have an abiding affection for classic '80s Finnish punk, but the more modern stuff has been very hit or miss to me (KIELTOLAKI obviously excluded, of course). KONKURSSI are right up my fucking alley though! Sloppy as fuck C-beat fast hardcore with MOB 47 influences firmly in place, though the tempo does take its foot off the gas at times, resulting in an early RIISTETYT feel. These six songs sound like these kids were drunk as fuck in the studio, not in a bad way but in the sense there's a real looseness and live feel that very few studio recordings can pull off. The lyrics are bleak and nihilistic, but are leavened with a very refreshing sense of humor as well. I think "Six Pack" is the first pro-beer gut song I've ever heard. This isn't a game-changer, but it's a fucking solid EP of classic Scandinavian hardcore fucking punk. (AU)
(Kamaset Levyt/Hohnie/Aanekkaat Asnitteet/ Nunchakupunk/Off)

KRANG – "Sounds of Death" LP

In a way, this is the evil twin of the DISTURD EP I reviewed earlier. Both bands are playing crust but where DISTURD strip the style down to its essential elements and play it completely straight, KRANG bring all the bells and whistles to their approach and make it a fucking party. From the clean-picked intro to the million riffs per song to the metal-as-fuck solos to the synth parts, KRANG are packing every inch of this LP with something attention-grabbing and it fucking works. This is the kind of shit I love to put on when I'm a little stoned, just so I don't feel so self-conscious about headbanging and air guitaring. Some of these solos are just fucking ridiculously over the top, and some of these riffs are clearly bitten from other band's songs but who fucking cares when the end result is an overflowing cornucopia of epic fucking crust. This is music to accompany the best night of Dungeons and Dragons ever played. I like all the lyrics, but I kind of wish that they were all (like "Black Standards") about epic battle. If I have any complaints about this record it is that there is a distinct lack of Orcs, well that and the spoken word thing drags on a bit, I guess. Whatever, it's all part of the show. (AU)
(Sacred Plague/Occult Whispers/Distroy)

LARS BANG LARSEN / THE UNITED STATES OF TOIL – split EP

So the a-side goes down like this; The USOT start out with a cool sounding FUGAZI-ish intro and things are looking up, when all of a sudden these vocals come in. This sort of spoken but gruff rock sounding thing followed by a doubled up sung part, and confusion reigns. But it just

goes back into that intro riff pretty quick, and things seem cool again and the band starts to build on that part, adding, taking away and so on and it kind of sounds more like something from the *God's Chosen People* compilation and you forget about the whole vocal thing when it hits again. But now it's this gruff, metal-ish growling thing and then the first vocal part again and then right back into the instrumental part and you've got your hands in your pockets and you're wearing a backpack and nodding you're head just a little until the growling thing comes back and the song ends. On the B-side you have LARS BANG LARSEN who appear to be an instrumental band that have taken on the vocalist from USOT for this split EP. Musically, this is in a similar vein, repetitive hardcore in the '90s emo way but with this slight hint of industrial music. Pretty cool stuff with the vocals sounding much better on this side of the record. (PA)
(Fidel Bastro)

THE LOLLIES – "Potential" CD

This isn't bad although there's some serious PROPAGHANDI worship going on here. Half of this is really good and the other half is just OK. If you like the mentioned band or are a Fat Records fan this might be for you as it is better than the usual ilk. (RL)
(Community)

LOOSE GRIP – "Cereal" EP

This is a four piece from Australia playing short fast and loud hardcore. I don't know if I would compare them to anyone in particular, but imagine the aggressive attitude of early '80s SoCal with a '90s sensibility. This dude screams in a way that I haven't heard since the last SWALLOWING SHIT EP. If you are unfamiliar with that one, imagine all those guys who have the guttural bellowing, but it's forced out in a way that sounds as brutal as any other, yet still has almost a falsetto quality to it. Rad shit. (BD)
(Bedroom Suck)

LOST SOUNDS – "Plastic Skin" EP

A reissue of the first LOST SOUNDS 7" that blew doors off hinges and brains through oral cavities when it initially emerged. The first time I heard this band was around the same time I first saw the SCREAMERS *Target Video* a boy who worked at Zed Records got me, and hearing something that was happening in the *now* that reflected the terror and creative destruction inherent in that video was an eye opener and a game changer. No more complacent bowling shirted Vegas dadrocker grampa shit, let's fucking burn! The songs are tightly wound balls of destruction with so many hooks you will feel like a second string punching bag after a night of shitty hitters have given it their all on your limp mug. Jay and Alicja's vocals are pulverizing bile fueled attacks, with the energy and fuck you of the godamn MUMMIES playing the first DRI 7" while "Warm Leatherette" barfs all over your couch. This shit is essential, a perfect 7" for an imperfect world. Will make you wanna steal a car, start smoking, blow up your school and so on until your parents no longer recognize you and life is just a blur of total destruction… Excuse me I have to go listen to this record sixty nine more times. (LG)
(Goner)

THEE MAKEOUT PARTY – "Jungle Cruise/Bubblegum Song"

THEE MAKEOUT PARTY was a good band, and *Play Pretend* was a really fun album. But with an intro like that, you can imagine what I'm about to say… this single just isn't good. Both songs were originally recorded for a second LP that never came out. And now a few years after their band's demise, Bachelor records has taken two cuts from that session and released them as a single. The A-side is a quirky attempt at a goofy song about a jungle cruise, complete with people making animal noises. Its charm did not win me over. And the B-side is a slower anti-love song that sounds like early OF MONTREAL. It's not up to the caliber of what they have created in the past, but check it out anyway if you're a goofy dude/lady. (FS)
(Bachelor)

MALAMONDOS – "Diabolik Sonik" CD

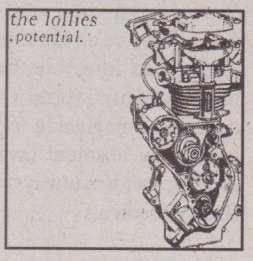
The MALAMONDOS make a triumphant return with an amazingly catchy garage rock album that seriously just might be their best yet! I have to admit I was skeptical when I first threw this on because, let's face it, it's a CD-only release of a style of music that got totally played out by the late '90s and it has sort of a cartoonish cover art (which is actually kind of cool, I have to admit). But by the end of the first track I was totally captivated by the astonishing vocals of singer Hunny Goodnight, which come off as a combination of Janis Joplin and Karen O, and maybe even Jane Blade of the DISHRAGS. The band likewise plays stompin' surf-inspired rock 'n' roll that easily stands above the bland, generic poop that saturated and destroyed this scene a few years back. Seriously, if you dug the garage punk scene a long time ago but got sick of it, you should check out this new MALAMONDOS album—you just might be reborn! (BG)
(Spinout)

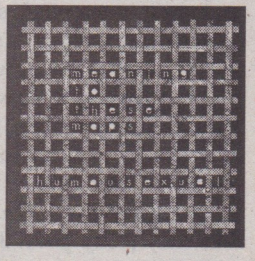
MASSACRE / SEKAANNUS – split LP

First and foremost, I wanna stress that this is a smashing hardcore split. Both sides offer up some top notch shit that's in line with traditional '80s Finnish hardcore, but with fresh and distinct musical ideas. I think this is rare in most hardcore records coming out these days, let alone new efforts from senior bands. So on to the next astonishing fact: this is the third split by these two bands over a span of twenty-eight years, the first two being 7"s released in 1984 and 2008. But as I stated before, the important part is this LP destroys. And it's limited to 300, so Finnish hardcore geeks-hurry the fuck up and find a nice online distro to order it from! (MA)
(Kämäset Levyt / Paha Tukka Elämä)

MAXIMUM RNR – "The Black And White Years" CD

One of those bands whose records I've seen around, but I never wanted to listen to because of the name. This magazine has such an identity it seems odd anyone would want to name their band after it. But they did so here we go. This CD is a singles compilation that also includes a comp track and a bunch of unreleased tracks. All of the songs are from 2002-2010. The music sounds very much like the CANDY SNATCHERS. The singer can't screech as high as LARRY MAY, nor can the guitarist rip it as well as MATTHEW ODIETUS, but they are trying. It is thrashy punk rock that veers too heavily on to the hard rock side. There are too many guitar solos and the vocals get really heavy metal at times. (CK)
(self-released)





THE MISTREATERS – 2xLP

A warts and all collection of singles, comp tunes and unreleased goodness from one of the last great turn-of-the-century American garage punk bands. Back before that genre classification became the signifier of annoyance and wimpiocity that it's come to be known as today, bands played with legit gusto, yelping and screeching their way through piles of assorted records that seemed to erupt rather than merely appear. The MISTREATERS made many such records. Some of 'em great, some good, but all worth a listen. They're all here, scattered over the course of two LPs in a way that manages to increase their collective worth. This is the best one-stop collection imaginable for this band. "No More" is still my absolute fave tune outta them too, proving that I'm always right. (MC)
(Dusty Medical)

MOMENTUM – "Whetting Occam's Razor" LP

The lo-fi guitar and sample intro part is about a minute too long, but when the band actually opens up the first couple songs are real ragers. The band is from London and plays dark hardcore that gets pretty melodic in later songs. Think HIS HERO IS GONE for stompy D-beats and heavy crust tone, LIGHTBRINGER for dark and melodic builds, and TRIAL for hardcore sensibility. There are samples about gender, animal rights, and religion so the band probably has politics but the text in the CD sized booklet was too small for me to read so I can only say that the songs seem pretty grim. They are more melodic than I care for in parts, I'm just the sort of dude who prefers the bashers, but the musicianship is quality and this thing sounds great. (BL)
(Halo of Flies)

MOSTROS – "Crop Circle Blues" LP

There are obviously exceptions to this, but it's weird how easy it can be to tell the average age of band members by their music sometimes. This band falls right in lockstep with my stereotype for "in-your-forties-or-close-to-it" punk. The first song is always a scorcher. Always. Second song will blaze too, but by the third or fourth it starts going into a blues-y rock thing. You can usually hear some STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN or BOB SEGER in there. And the rest of the album will have a distinct blues feel, with punk drumming. Not saying this is a bad thing. This album is actually pretty good, they have a cool NEW BOMB TURKS style. It's just that age is a funny thing. It can really affect your taste, attitude and song writing in ways you have no control over. And these Spaniards wear it on their sleeve. They make music that speaks to their reality, and that's the way it should be. It'd be embarrassing (but kind of awesome) to see some 40-year-old dudes trying to be the GERMS. Actually I take that back; that would be all-the-way awesome. Anyway, if you have come to the point in your life where you can freely admit to liking classic rock, then you are in a place where MOSTROS can rock your world! (FS)
(Flying Peluca)

NAPALM RAID – "Trail of the World" EP

Nova Scotia punks from the land of CONTAGIUM strike hard. This EP has all the crust glory of DOOM with the raw D-Beat perfection of *Victims of a Bomb Raid* era ANTI-CIMEX. It's a rare treat to hear D-beat with crust vocals that leaves one wanting more when it's all been heard before. Complete with a BASTARD cover—nice! (AE)
(Rust and Machine)

THE NERVOUS – "Genital Panic!" EP

The NERVOUS belts out this four-song EP that is urgent, tight and punk as fuck, in that way that those Scandinavian power-pop bands are punk as fuck, the NERVOUS is from the US though. The guitars are clean and crisp and the female vocals are pissed and perfect. This band owes a little bit of inspiration to MASSHYSTERI, but that isn't a bad thing, necessarily. My only complaint is that it's too short and I have to keep flipping this thing over and over for maximum enjoyment. A+. (GH)
(Nervous)

NOVACK – "Faking Noise" EP

The "Faking Noise" reminded me of *Menace* era ELASTICA, particularly their song "Generator;" shouty girls elated over keyboard mutated punk. It's super good fuck shit up puker punk dance party with post-punk guitars and early Detroit techno keyboard creepiness and croony/bellowing girls melting down over it all. The B-side consists of two sick scraped out no waver skronkers, in a LES GEORGES LENINGRAD stylee… I imagine this band would rule at a party. (LG)
(Fidel Bastro)

OGRE SMASH DEATH BOOM – CD

Garage folky indie rock here. There's a little DINOSAUR JR. with some of the slop of let's say an In The Red type band or even PAVEMENT. This had a couple OK songs but other than that it was kind of tough to get through. (RL)
(Anti Civ)

THEE OH SEES / TOTAL CONTROL – split LP

Say what you will about the OH SEES, but don't call them boring. At this point in punk, you either like this band or don't—there are very few people with no opinion on them (unless, like many people likely reading this magazine, they've never heard of them). Me, I think they're OK—I really, really enjoy some of their songs, I think they're wild live, but I don't really listen to them that often and their shows drive me nuts on account of the legions of shirtless stagediving college students. Anyways, this certainly isn't garage rock, and I'm not sure why they've been shoved into that particular ghetto. It's freak music, Dwyer-rock, like the MONKS on ENO if the sixties (and seventies) never existed. TOTAL CONTROL, everyone's favorite current jizz-rock band, offer a slower side that is a bit more punk than their raved about LP. This band is great for a reason—they deliver on the promise that so many people made when talking about shit like ICEAGE and, long ago, the REFUSED. This is future-punk—this is a synthesis, a distillation of every punk posture that's ever been, a mixture of so many ingredients that it turns out to be something completely new. A classic band. The last song on their side is amazing (and seems to feature vocals by the mysterious/feral Australian punk legend known only as "SNAKE"). A band that will be remembered. (BB)
(Castle Face)

OPPOSITION RISING – "Aftermathematics" LP

I give OPPOSITION RISING some credit for mixing all sorts of different hardcore, punk and even ska sounds on their debut. This Boston band with former members of TOXIC NARCOTIC and MOUTH SEWN SHUT ends up playing a burly hardcore style that sounds like a modern hardcore band who takes some influences from SICK OF IT ALL, a few Boston hardcore bands like BLOOD FOR BLOOD and then throws in some vague ska influences. It's not that they *are* ska or sound like SICK OF IT ALL / BLOOD FOR BLOOD but the influences can be heard. They have created somewhat of a unique sound. The problem is I'm just not sure it works. (MH)
(Tankcrimes / Rodent Popsicle / Active Rebellion)

PEACE OR ANNIHILATION – "Fear Control" LP

The first vinyl album of this noisy raw punk band from Indonesia, that follows several full length cassettes, CD-Rs, an EP and split 7"s they've released since forming in 2004. While this DISCHARGE-by-way-of Sweden-by-way-of Japan genre has its set forms and sounds, the twelve tracks have inventive guitar parts that set this apart from standard issue D-beats and it's largely these riffs and searing guitar leads that make this memorable. The drums rumble and crash rock solid and the vocals harshly scream basic Bleak DISCHARGE-haiku style lyrics against fascists, media control, war in both English and Indonesian, but it's *Hear Nothing, See Nothing* DISCHARGE-style guitar squealing and wall of guitar that really make this band work. Set in a flat recording with not a lot of low end, with the vocals and drums at the forefront of the mix, it allows the recording to feel chaotic while at the same time building power and speed from the simple yet well written straight forward DIS-attack. Great album of this style and totally recommended!!! (KS)
(Shogun)

THE PHEROMOANS – "Darby, Joan & Fosters" LP

Fluttering, percussive, extraneous noise and what must be the sound of waterboarding through a plate reverb unit mingled with decidedly TELEVISION PERSONALITIES-inflected songwriting and a penchant for psychedelia on the cusp of madness. The more focused B-side is given to less atmospherics and hones a more straight-ahead technique, which suits the band better. Evoking film clips of cult members falling to their knees and hippie cannibals equally, this is a significant achievement. (SL)
(Clan Destine)

PINATA PROTEST – "Plethora" CD

Tex-Mex punks in accordion frenzy. Latino punk (largely sung in Spanish), with a lead accordion adding the necessary elements of cumbia (and polka) to the punked out mix. Fast, furious and thoroughly enjoyable. If you switched genres/styles (and continents of origin) you'd have the Chicano FLOGGING MOLLY. Though I much prefer these chaps, I have to say. A rerecorded (much more bollocks to the guitars) edition of their debut 2010 release. (RK)
(Saustex)

THE POOR CHOICES – "Girl Crimes" CD

When I first heard this I thought this all girl combo had to be from LA. Punky but also very rock in a trashy garage way. It turns out they are from British Columbia. But ultimately I couldn't get into this, as it just seems mediocre no matter how you look at it. The drumming is a little too sloppy and vocals are a little too monotone with very plain material. A work in progress at best at this point. Too bad because I'm a girl band fan. (RL)
(Shake!)

POTATO FRITZ – "Propeller" EP

Dissonant Kraut post-punk is a dish best served mit bier, wurst, and curry ketchup. This band chips away (chips, POTATO FRITZ, see what I did there?) at a fertile vein containing the carbonized remnants left by fossils like JOY DIVISION, the EX, and CIRCUS LUPUS. Like their namesake, it's a delicious dish. Three songs and a bonus Styrofoam model plane. (AM)
(Fidel Bastro)

A PRETTY MESS – "Filthy Poor" CD

LA punk with raspy female vocals. This reminds me of GITS and the Euro band AEROBITCH because of the vocal delivery. Pretty old school punk with covers of AGENT ORANGE and ADOLESCENTS thrown in. I was into this and would certainly check them out live. Having just opened on the recent GV30 festival, I would guess they are an up and coming thing in the SoCal scene. (RL)
(self-released)

RANCID HELL SPAWN – "Abolition Of The Orgasm" EP

Since you're all nine year olds, this here band made a gaggle of records in the early '90s that divided the masses. Are they noise? Are they punk? Are they total assholes? YES. Want unwanted houseguest to bail? Play anything by RANCID HELL SPAWN…done deal. Is it weird that they've gotten (gulp) catchy since we last heard them sixteen years ago? Whatever. I welcome them back with open arms. I hope they kill everyone under 30 as they renew their quest. (MC)
(Wrench)

RAS – "Illusions Calculees" EP

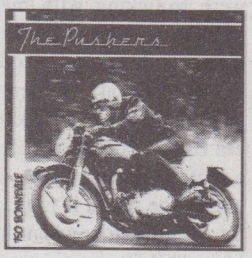
Haha *sick*! It's not every month you get to needledrop some unknown unheard bonafide '70s French punk rock. Actually, has this ever happened? Maybe SOGGY or GUILTY RAZORS, but I'd heard (of) them long ago. RAS were one of the first French punk rock bands, hailing from Caen in the northwest Normandy region, plugging away for a brief three-year stint circa 1977-1979, playing alongside local heroes BYE BYE TURBIN and STARSHOOTER. I've always been particularly obsessed with "true" '70s punk rock, back before the punk rock sound was super codified and bands each had their own unique sound and perspective, and RAS don't disappoint. The two songs on the A-side are demo tracks recorded in 1978, with a frantic teen spaz punk sound with nods to their rockin' French forefathers LITTLE BOB STORY, but way lo-fi dumbed down and aggro almost to HITLER SS proportions. The title track wouldn't be out of place on a KBD type compilation. The flipside, recorded on French radio in 1979 is darker and dirgier, with an unforgettable melody chorus. Includes a two-sided color info sheet (in French), and a great vintage look to the full-color sleeve. Hopefully this won't run you $10 in the US, but even so, it's worth it for the title track alone. (GB)
(Memoire Neuve)

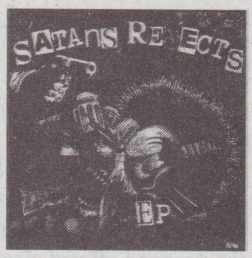
RAYGUN – "Sotamuistoja" LP

This is not just a reissue, it is an actual release of the Finnish hardcore band RAYGUN, including the three songs that appeared on their 7" from 1987. All the songs on here were recorded from 1985 thru 1995 with ten previously unreleased tracks, meaning these dudes came around after the first epic wave of Finnish HC that everyone hails as the best era, but fuck that… this is serious in its capacity to rage. This is ugly vocalled, rudimentary, basic and classic Finnish HC varying from fast to mid-tempo. The musicianship is non-existent, which means it's just fucking right for me. This is simple raw and driving with some pissed vocals and sloppy as shit moments. Love it. The more current stuff is very different in the almost spoken vocal style—they definitely got better at playing their instruments, and even though they sound distinctly different they are just as killer as the rawer ones. Holy shit. All the songs here are worth a listen but there are some fucking kick ass anthemic jams on here. I am into this. There is an insert with all the lyrics. 300 in existence. (MB)
(self released / Kämäset Levyt)

REACTIONS – "Saturday's Gone Wild" LP

Fuck! Wotta Monster! Damn. Early Punk fanatics have long lost sleep (and $$$) over Florida's REACTIONS uber raer first 7" EP. For years people dismissed their equally raer second 7" EP as their wimpy powerpop sellout record, but in recent years, people have finally started to come around to it as one of the best punky powerpop EPs the US has to offer (and rightly so!). But this LP came out of nowhere: a whole friggin' LP's worth of vintage '79-'81 material featuring the seven songs from the two EPs along with ten (*ten*!) unreleased studio and live tracks. Great sound quality, and I hope you like The Punk Rock, because the second EP tracks are by far the "wimpiest" of the lot. To be honest, this is one of those records you could consider ditching your original EPs for, everything all in one place with deluxe full color gatefold cover full of tasty archival images. There have been a fair amount of posthumous unre-





leased LPs coming on the market lately, but this is by far one of the biggest surprises, right up there next to the unreleased PROTEX LP from last year. Great stuff! (GB)
(Cheap Rewards)

REGAL – "Possible Endings" LP

The guitar sound recalls the bent wisdom of the FALL mashed up with teenage car club sounds from some Tacoma garage in 1964. Unfortunately all of this is filtered through the beachy haze that is currently swamping the garage punk scene rendering things gentle and stoner-y when they could/should be operating from a vicious terrifying swill. Why not bad trips and waves full of sewage? Fuck all this gentle Best Coast eulogy, let's fucking riot! The basic construct of this band is a good time, but man, I wish they were going for blood rather than a pastoral stroll. By the time the acoustic number starts up instructing you that now is the time to go with the flow, you know these chaps wish they were frolicking with their corporately funded friends on a Bruise Cruise to nowhere. But by no means is this a bad record; it's quite a pleasant listen, a decent basement party starter for sure, and you know if you like a little *Bradley's Barn* era BEAU BRUMMELS you will enjoy this in a most adequate manner. But shit, it's 2012, the end of the world is nigh, who the fuck wants to go with the flow when there's an apocalypse to be had? (LG)
(Frantic)

ROTTEN CADAVER – "Hijacked Reality" LP

Since personal stories make review interesting and serve to humanize both band and reviewer, I saw ROTTEN CADAVER once, in 2007, in Austin, Texas. Not sure how I made it to the show because I was exceptionally intoxicated and on a lot of drugs. I was asked to work the door and offered alcohol and drugs as compensation – this seemed like and excellent idea. I took a lot of money, took a lot of drugs, pulled some dude's pants down and tried to pass out in the van but there were people fucking in it so I went back in to the show and watched (existed while) another band play(ed). So, I guess I didn't actually see ROTTEN CADAVER, but that's my personal touch, and considering the music contained on this twelve inch wax petroleum round, it seemed appropriate to share. Urgent, forceful and piercing hardcore punk from Portland…the high end is cranked to the max on everything (just like the volume) giving the recording an awkward fierceness. UK via Japan hyper-charged punk charged on cheap booze, social anxiety and POISON IDEA. Maybe I'm just lost in the moment, but this shit is ruling my world right now. Brilliantly fukkd up. (WN)
(Blackwater)

RVIVR – "The Joester Sessions 08-11" LP

To start with, it should be noted that, this record rules. No, "rules" is an understatement. It destroys, it's magic and it sets the world on fire. RVIVR is one of one best pop-punk bands of the decade. It's hard to recommend a band more strongly. Lately it feels like they have been turning off a lot of people because they are so outspoken about their politics. Political and social consciousness plays a central role in their music, and their shows. Which is kind of a like a mosquito buzzing around the face for all the folks who are just there to dance and party. Cause the music is kind of feel-good party music, but the lyrics have substance. And when I say "outspoken" I mean "viciously outspoken." But their messages are always totally right on, they honestly demand our attention. There are lots of records that come out every month that are good, but rarely is there one that's important. This record is important. And it's not that the songs are just really good, or just that the message is significant. It's that they are both happening in unison while recreating everything you *like* about pop-punk into something new and exciting. Anyway, as the title implies, this is a compilation of all their earlier recordings. On this record they have compiled both sold out 7"s and a 12" EP only released in Europe. This is the best place to start if you're discovering the band for the first time, but will be nothing new to folks who have followed this band for the last few years—except for the cover of "Elizabethan Collar" which doesn't appear anywhere else. Totally awesome, totally essential. (FS)
(Rumbletowne)

SAL BANDO – "Suicide Summer" EP

I enjoy the guitar sound on this record; it's clean with some reverb drenched solos. Melodic poppy rock. The singer's voice sound has a similar inflection to that of the guy from the HOLD STEADY or even at times JAWBREAKER. Sometimes the band goes into some breakdowns that remind me a lot of TILTWHEEL. Sounds like a band that's into '80s pop (i.e. the PLIMSOULS) based on the guitar tone and song style, as well as melodic punk (JAWBREAKER/TILTWHEEL) judging by the vocals. (P$)
(Hot Cars Kill)

SATAN'S REJECTS – "Alcohol in Vein" EP

A 7" recorded in 2005 that, I think is finally seen the light of day. I can't tell if this was ever released before but it seems like it wasn't. This SATAN'S REJECTS are from Greece and do straight forward punk with gruff understandable vocals and sometimes catchy music. There is a slight street punk feel sometimes and they aren't afraid to write catchy tunes. At least one track is sung in Greek and it appears to be a track about heroin use and a cover of another Greek punk band from the '90s, KOINONIKH. I'm imagining big spiked hair and tattoos. (MH)
(Gorgiou)

THE SCARRED – "Live Fast, Die Poor" CD

Oh my Christ! The excruciating pain that listening to this caused me is beyond words!! I popped this CD into my computer, assuming fairly enough by the looks of these "punks" on the cover, that this would be substandard, but tolerable middle-of-the-road punk rock. Boy, was I wrong. This was un-fucking-bearable. Even when GREEN DAY was an OK band (like 20 years ago), I can't think of a band that tried harder to sound more like them. And I'm talking *Dookie* and beyond GREEN DAY, not the cool, fun pre-*Dookie* GREEN DAY. This is like the fucking modern Broadway-era GREEN DAY and we all know how lame that is. I seriously can't think of a way to describe this… Oh, wait. DOOKIE! That is what this CD is. A pile of shit. I honestly couldn't even get through the whole damn thing… I seriously cringed the whole time it was on. Ugh. (ML)
(Sixtynine Apple / Jailhouse)

SEA OF SHIT – "Worn Out" EP

This 7" sounds like the band went into the studio, pressed record and yelled, "Go!," recoding all the tracks without stopping to take a breath. That's a good thing. What you end up with is noisy, chaotic, feedback riddled powerviolence and hardcore. The tracks fly by; usually end with some feedback and the next track starts up. This creates wonderful bursts of chaos and an EP full of energy. (MH)
(Prgnt/Idoneum Bello)

SECRET PROSTITUES – "Fantazi Di Aushwitz" EP

I reviewed this lot's LP a while back and figured them for a long lost Swede-punk band, but when I figured out my mate from Texas put it out I soon found out it's a bunch of twenty-somethings from Houston. Now their shit is impossible to find 'cos any schlub with an ear for good sounds is seeking this out. Like a more lo-fi RUDE KIDS version of the OBNIIIs or SHITTY LIMITS. Raw, mid-tempo… catchy as all hell. If you geek out on old shit like EBBA GRÖN and the RUDE KIDS but rougher than shit you'd freak on this lot. Good luck finding it. (TB)
(Bat Shit)

SECRET PROSTITUES / TALK SICK BRATS split EP

Oooh these guys are so daring and confrontational! They went and put a Confederate flag on not one, but *both* sides of this EP. Can you believe it? Oh wait a minute, that's right: it's the year 2012, when every played-out shock tactic in the book gets regurgitated to death by a bunch of spineless twits and art school kids too afraid to step out of their tidy little universe and face the big, bad real world. A shame really, cause the SECRET PROSTITUTES stuff featuring a singer that sounds like a bratty Finnish teenager in heat—is a lot of fun and should really be left to stand on its own merits. The TALK SICK

BRATS side is totally unremarkable street punk, including a song called "Electrocute Yourself" which was a lot better when VOM did it about thirty years ago. Snooze. (JH)
(Bat Shit)

SHELLSHAG – "Fuck Society Vol. 1" LP

I have heard people say that SHELLSHAG are the best cover band ever. My initial response was always, "What? They have tons of original songs. They even have a couple LPs out!" It's true though, that their live shows are split between original songs and covers, but I would never call them a cover band. They are, however, probably my favorite band to watch play, covers and all. This record puts to vinyl the SHELLSHAG versions of some of the best punk/new wave songs of the last several decades. I can't really pick the notables, because they are all notable. So without further adieu, here are the bands covered: SHOTWELL, INXS, THE UNDERTONES, WARSAW/JOY DIVISION, HICKEY, LIZ PHAIR, ARCHERS OF LOAF, UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND, WHEN IN ROME, DESCENDENTS, FLESHIES, WIPERS, THE JAM, and AK77. Two exceptions—the WHEN IN ROME song on here is a re-recording of the one available on their split with THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB. The last song on the B-side, and the namesake for this collection, is the original recording of AK77's "Fuck Society." A fitting tribute to the little known band that affected this duo in such a way. (BD)
(Mauled By Tigers)

THE SHIRLEY MACLAINES – "Want You To Go" EP

This record is really charming. I know that is probably not what many males (and some females or vice versa) reading *MRR* want to hear about a quintet of young Austrian women playing garage punk. But that is the SHIRLEY MACLAINES. This record is amateurish, bratty, punk-y, fun and, yes, oh so charming. Five catchy songs delivered with some attitude and a lot of cuteness. Reminds me of the early DONNAS, but recorded much better. (CK)
(Bachelor)

SHIT GETS SMASHED – "Shit Happens" EP

Fuck yeah! This shit is punk as fuck! And I mean that in a good way!! These young'uns from Seattle really know how to bang out a good punk tune – six songs in all on this little 7", and each is good. No filler on this one! This is spiky-haired, studded-leather, Mohican drunk-punk to the max. The lead of song "Alcoholic Energy" is an ode to Sparks energy drink that had been briefly banned. All in all a fun and upbeat, punk-as-fuck EP!! (ML)
(Artificial Limb)

SICK/TIRED – "Lifetaker" EP

Seen this band's name for a bit, and kinda figured they sounded like the '90s band SICK AND TIRED (no logical reason for this other than the name, of course). They don't. Downtuned grinding crust from Chicago suburbs from these miscreants, churning with frustration and blasting to oblivion… or at least blasting until the stoner rock jam that takes up a significant portion of the B-side changes gears completely. The grind returns to close out the slab, and this hateful unit closes the door on another platter. Looks like I need to seek out their previous efforts. (WN)
(PRGNT / Idoneum Bello)

THE SPOOKY – "Damned and Evil/Halloween Night"

What the fuck has happened to Hostage Records?!? This amazing label, that was formerly home to the almighty BONECRUSHER as well as solid punk bands like SMOGTOWN, etc. has decided to dabble in "psychobilly" for lack of a better description. The SPOOKY can be filed in the same trash bin as HORROR POPS or TIGER ARMY as far as I'm concerned. I get the appeal of what they're trying to do, but somehow I'm just not buying a chorus of "They call me damned and evil" sung as wimpy as this is. It just doesn't sound "evil" in the least! As much as I can't stand him now, GLENN DANZIG is about the only human that can pull off this poppy/spooky/evil sound… (ML)
(Hostage)

THE STITCHES – "Nowhere" 12" EP

While the PR sheet that comes with this record would like you to believe you're gonna be shocked and terrified when you hear it (it's described as a collection of old STITCHES tracks re-recorded with drum machines and children's toys "like METAL URBAIN fights THE SCREAMERS"), nothing could be further from the truth. If it truly sounded anything like that, I can guarantee you I'd be singing its praises. What we've got here, however, is too tame, boring, and conventional to shock just about anyone, including my parents, who are in their seventies. If you want weird/scary/uncomfortable punk, skip the STITCHES and look to one of the countless bands chronicled in these pages that are actually doing it right. (JH)
(Vinyl Dog)

THE SWINGERS – "Certain Sound/Baby"

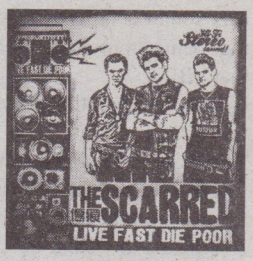
Two New Zealand hits of the pre-Flying Nun era that straddle the line between that sound and the previous British-ape moves that bands the world over used before regional sounds became more defined. That is to say, it's a fucking two-shot banger, a couple classically punk hits, the second of which seems to be a pro-miscegenation ode that marries retarded "social conscience" with a thousand hooks. These hits were only available on the classic *AK79* comp before this. I'm quite likely going to buy this, however, it's limited to 300 copies so we'll see if I manage to do that before I forget. Ex-SPLIT ENZ. (BB)
(Descabezados En Acapulco, no website but available through distros)

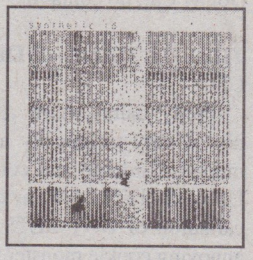
SYNTHETIC ID – "White Walls" EP

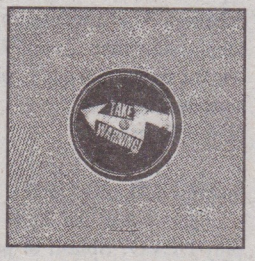
A vinyl release of this band's three-song demo tape, which lit up the messageboards thanks to the blogging of a certain local bearded tastemaker. Well deserved interest, since SYNTHETIC ID are indeed one of the better local bands of recent times. Frenetic timing and guitar damage reminiscent of the PROLETARIAT underscores a vocal delivery not dissimilar to the OBSERVERS but less operatic and more desperate. Definitely a winning combination and one to watch. (AM)
(Satellite Visions)

TAKE WARNING – "Let it Down" EP

This is some pretty good punk rock from France. I hear a lot of late '80s/early '90s Midwest influence on this. I'm looking at you, Chicago. Of the two sides here, the B-side is more melodic, but this copy appears to have been slashed when the box it came in was cut open, making it kinda tough to listen to. It's also worth noting that this guy's vo-







cals sound a lot like JELLO BIAFRA without that damn tremolo thing he does. I never liked that. (BD)
(Crapoulet/Meantime/PurePainSugar)

THERAPISTS – "Hate Sweats" LP

Decent, normal "snotty" punk, (though that may just be the singer) from Portland, Oregon. I've heard this band before, and while nothing by them has really grabbed me, I wouldn't mind seeing them or playing with them on tour… But this style has been done to death. If you're not bringing something completely wild to the table, it's hard to pay attention. There's some songs on here that are really good, there's some that aren't that good, and there's one that uses the same riffs as an EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESION RING song in a way that's a bit too close for comfort. The whole package is a little too Portland for me, that is, it seems to exist in a sort of void that makes me uncomfortable. Needs a bit more danger. (BB)
(Jonny Cat, no contact)

TILL WE DROP – "The Summer Triangle" CD

Pretty damn weird all round. This quintet play a very technically accomplished blend of modern hardcore and college rock—not unlike UNWRITTEN LAW, or the last major label incarnation of BOY SETS FIRE, complete with annoying cookie monster vocal bursts. Excellent production, and musicianship, and typically college themes of being bros and hanging out and whatnot. And it would appear they are German. Depressing that Clear Channel culture has extended so far. However pleasant and sugary the soundtrack. (RK)
(Let It Burn)

TUMOR WARLORD – "Bio-Machine" EP

This is like BLACK SABBATH trying to play DEVO? Splash of post-hardcore? Twist of garage rock? Like… cyber-metal? The most terrible parts of all these things. The macho braggadocio of garage, the emo call-outs of hardcore, a sad attempt at dragging metal through sci-fi culture. No. (MM)
(Jeth-Row)

TV FREAKS – LP

Raw rocking punk rock. It's got that cheeky ear for a killer hook and a damn fine respect for keeping the production in the barn and out of the sterile studio. It drives with got those fist in the air moments, it stays dirty, it stays weird, carries a hint of menace and has me exercising those neck muscles at the almost gym like *MRR*. Think FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS, the RETARDS and the CLONE DEFECTS or just think Mitch Cardwell's record collection. A top ten of the month winner. (SD)
(Schizophrenic)

UNRELEASABLES – "Crewe Boys" EP

This band's from London but you'd never guess it. A total throwback to the wimpy era QUEERS, ANGRY SAMOANS, SCREECHING WEASEL or a lot of old Gilman bands. They even got a song called "I Wanna Live in Berkeley." I don't know if you guys want to go *that* far but this has me grinning and tapping my dirty converse for sure. (RO)
(Bat Shit)

USELESS EATERS – "The Moves" EP

A one-dimensional garage punk EP is fine, as long as the single dimension imparts some ruthless swagger, savage abandon or any other single compelling aesthetic decision, but this EP is just lackluster. The tempo slows and guzzles Gatorade before breaking a sweat, the vocals are mostly spoken-chic without the flare to justify the style, and the songwriting falls flat. The actual performance is what makes it a particular drudge, though. Each instrument remains thoroughly pedestrian, which is a shame, since a little blood on the fret board could redeem the tunes. (SL)
(Jolly Dream)

VARUKERS – "Vintage Varukers: Rare and Unreleased 1980-1985"

A big cheers to AntiSociety for doing this! This CD contains tracks off the 1980 demo, the 1982 *Pogar* 7", tracks off the timeless *We Don't Want Your Fucking Law* Mortarhate compilation, and more. It has all of your favorite early songs as well as more rare tracks, like out-takes from the *Bloodsuckers* 1983 recording session. Includes lyrics and fuzzy pictures of some of your favorite '82 lads. This was very well put together and I recommend you pick it up for your pogoing pleasure. (AE)
(AntiSociety)

VIBROLAS – "Van Wars" CD

The three members of the VIBROLAS must listen to a ton of BLACK SABBATH and HENDRIX and CREAM, because the musical influence here is undeniable. *Are You Experienced*, *Disraeli Gears*, and the first four SABBATH albums—all the shit is unquestionably (and respectably) in their record collection. Unfortunately, the other half of this mutual collection surely consists of thousands of beer-soaked, late night dive bar garage bands from the '90s and '00s. At times I'm totally digging the killer power chord proficiency, and the competent rhythm section that backs it up, but then I'll occasionally lose interest because of the female/male joint vocals that sound like so many uninspiring bar punk bands that play when the place is clearing out. I'm sort of undecided on this, but I bet the sideburns, converse sneakers and girls with leopard print skirt set would totally dig it. (BG)
(Transistor 66)

THE VON ERICH SUICIDE MISSION – LP

I enjoy drinking. I also enjoy bars. I even enjoy seeing punk bands play in bars. I realize this is a fairly unpopular opinion, but it's true. All that being said, I do not, in any way, find satisfaction in listening to bands that can *only* be enjoyed in bars. THE VON ERICH SUICIDE MISSION is one such band. This is vapid punk'n'roll of the most boring variety. It's super clean, all the hooks are blatant and frankly I can't be bothered to give a shit. (KM)
(Hundemann)

WALLRIDES – "I Can't Function" EP

This four-piece from the north of Sweden, on the Gulf of Bothnia, have a song about surfing, to my surprise. Most of the other songs are about skating—they're not real adventurous in the lyric department. They play a tight, rudimentary hardcore, along the lines of E.T.A. and a million others. They have a great, rough guitar sound, but even this quick eight song EP seems a little more than they were ready for. Some cool tracks, but not a mandatory release. (JM)
(self-released)

WARCOLLAPSE – "Defy!" LP

A reissue of the most recent full-length from one of the powerhouses of Swedish metalpunk, WARCOLLAPSE have been putting out some of the world's heaviest käng for over two decades and this album is no exception. Fans of DISFEAR, MARTYRDÖD, and the rest of the Scandi-pantheon will eat this right up, and the band remains faithful to the guttural vocals, plodding riffs and meaty d-beats that have defined their sound since the mid-'90s. Shit gets downright psychedelic for the YOB-worthy sludge of the title track, and a liberal use of effects throughout the LP adds a whole other dimension to an already-winning formula – I love how the vocals occasionally integrate delay in a subtle, understated way to add an extra air of atmosphere. This record was apparently recorded over the course of three years, and it shows, with incredible musicianship and a total absence of filler. If this record doesn't have you involuntarily pumping your fists within minutes of putting it on, you obviously do not lead a crust as fuck existence. (WB)
(Profane Existence)

WARRIOR KIDS – "Les Enfants De L'Espoir…" LP

This is apparently the first legitimate US pressing of this now classic 1985 LP and marks the band's 30th anniversary. WARRIOR KIDS were French skinheads and naturally get lumped in as an Oi! band, but much as COCK SPARRER don't really typify that genre, neither do WARRIOR KIDS. For the most part, the songs on this album are the chiming power-pop of the JAM or even TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, peppered with typical skinhead stabs at cod ska. If you can look past the occasional skanking gui-

tar and "pick it up," this is a stellar LP that can now finally be picked up without a visit to the bank officer. (AM)
(Katorga Works)

WHITE LOAD – "Waynes World III b/w Godfather IV" LP

I keep thinking someone is trying to talk to me, but every time I take the headphones off I realize it's just something on this record. Multi-dimensional experience! Except there is only one dimension present here: blown out "garage" recorded using a tin can telephone as the mic. They are from Rhode Island, so perhaps they are RISD warehouse dwellin' artistes? Or degenerate scum bags!? Or both! It sort of sounds like a generic hardcore band from 1982 in terms of the relentlessness of the approach, and the vocalist brings to mind "Demon Inside of Me" by SEPTIC DEATH. But my friends, this is punk rock, you need one dumb beat, one shitty riff and one yowling bag of agony and you are set for a lifetime of rewards. The B-side is a live recording for your yearly dose of stage banter. There are many gifts offered by this beat combo, and I think if you are a fan of say the NEOS and the GRABBIES, as well as being punched in the face by a meathead, this will be just the ticket. (LG)
(Load)

WOOLLEN KITS – LP

More OZ-fuzz-pop to soothe your tired ears, fatigued by too much American garage punk. Yawning slovenly jangly shambles (what people mean when they use C86 as a genre, ignoring the likes of STUMP, BOGSHED, A WITNESS, BIG FLAME etc that don't fit the bedsit underachiever stereotype). For fans of THE CLEAN, VASELINES, etc. (AM)
(RIP Society)

WSZY – "Miliony Osukanyth" CD

Stripped down melodic Polish punk. Combine basic UK82 with distinctly Eastern European bitterness in the vocals and melodies that nod liberally to early Polish bands, and deliver the whole thing with an energy typically reserved for Midwestern basements. My Polish is rusty, but it appears that WSZY existed from '01-'06. Good stuff, and I'm glad it's getting the proper treatment. (WN)
(83)

YPÉRITE – "Eat the Rich" EP

YPÉRITE, hailing from Paris, plays straightforward punk in the vein of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and the ZERO BOYS (at least in the style of guitar leads). "Eat the Rich" is the strongest track on here, spitting punk passion all over the place and making you want to pogo all over town. Even the ska part towards the end can't diminish its power. The instrumental, "Bagsbanni" is kind of a throwaway track and seems like it's only included on here to demonstrate the guitarist's prowess as a talented instrumentalist. Besides that little speed bump, this isn't bad at all. (GH)
(Close Up)

YPÉRITE – "Frigorifies" CD

Best thing about this disc is the excellent "brain as handgrenade" graphic on the CD disc. Not that the rest of it is bad. YPÉRITE are a French quartet, who sing in their native tongue (always a plus), and sound all the better for it. Musically, they are of the stripped down punk 'n' roll school that was championed by the likes of the HUMPERS two decades ago. My schoolboy French isn't up to understanding too much of the lyric sheets, but it seems that their hearts are in the right(left) place, and they don't like Bill Gates. Some nifty guitaring too. Pas mal, pas mal. (RK)
(Close Up)

ZOSCH – "Birds Don't Lie" LP

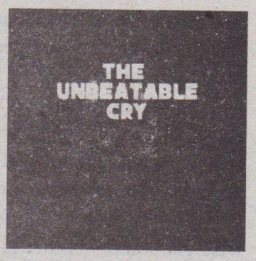
Fundamentally, the music is very rudimentary punk, with affected female vocals channeling the dark mantras of brooding, post-SIOUXSIE women in punk. Distracting keyboard melodies permeate nearly every moment of the record, and the basic, archetypal synth tone really denigrates what is otherwise a decent performance from the group. It doesn't help that the album is mixed so awkwardly. The guitar is much too low, although the tone isn't distinct enough to really enhance the music, the bass is oddly separate and at odds with the vocals, and the drums are recorded so clearly that the weak cymbals with their complete lack of sustain become glaring mistakes. If the keyboards were abandoned, and the entire thing was recorded live in a basement with one microphone picking up just the room sound, it would be a solid demo tape, but this LP is irresponsibly premature, depicting a band in it's formative stages with too many resources. (SL)
(Contraszt! / Drink And Be Merry / Spastic Fantastic)

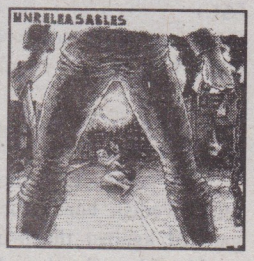
V/A – "A Better Tomorrow: The Next Generation of U.S. Oi!" EP

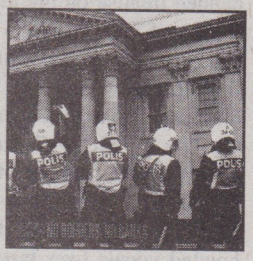
If you know me, you know that I've been waiting with bated breath for the new generation of American Oi! to arrive. Finally, my prayers have been answered! Okay, that concludes the sarcastic portion of this review, so let's get into it. The first band on here is called NOI!SE. How clever. They actually aren't bad; they're channeling early BRIGGS and it kind of works. RAZORS IN THE NIGHT is up next and they're awful. What do they sound like? Please refer to the title of this record and take a wild guess. On the B-side, the BROADSIDERS might be even worse than RAZORS IN THE NIGHT. Teenage soccer fans that have never heard COCK SPARRER might get excited for music like this, but not I. Lastly, we have local boys SYDNEY DUCKS with a re-recording of the first track off their demo. I like the song (it's called "Brannan's Fall") but this incarnation sounds really flat in comparison to demo version. A disappointing comp overall, especially since the title is so declarative. In the rare instances I'm actually in the mood to hear this type of stuff, I'll definitely be sticking with yesterday's Oi! bands, A.C.A.B! (KM)
(Longshot / Contra)

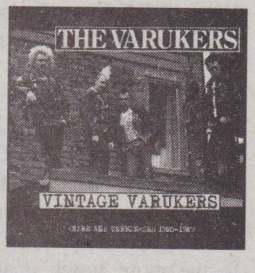
V/A – "Discharge Tributo" CD

Yeah yeah, *another* DISCHARGE tribute record. There have been some classics, and some real stinkers over the years, but this is one to be excited about. Why? Because this is an all Brazilian comp, and if there's one scene that can do filthy d-beat it's the fucking Brazilians. There are a few recognizable names here (BESTHÖVEN, GRITOS DE ALERTA, ARMAGEDOM, DESASTRE, LOBOTOMIA), but most of these bands are either obscure or totally unknown to me. It's hard to get a real grasp on which of these bands have potential going forward based on a cover, but UNFIT SCUM absolutely kill "Always Restrictions," CHAKA turn in a rabid and appropriately basement-recording sounding "Never Again" and D-CREÄSING LIFE









(a one-man band) rip out a disgustingly noisy "Maimed and Slaughtered" that's probably the highlight of the disc to me. Look, the *Discharged* comp. (the one with C.F.D.L., S.D.S. and DISASTER) will probably always be the best of the bunch but this is quite excellent, and provides a great opportunity to introduce yourself to some bands you probably wouldn't otherwise encounter. I'll definitely be keeping an eye out for more D-CREÄSING LIFE material! Also comes with a rad DISCHARGE collage poster. (AU)
(Massive/ Two Beers or Not Two Beers / Terrotten / Ultraviolence / Bombardeio / Moribundo)

V/A – "More World, Less Bank 3: No Borders, No Banks" EP

Eight band, eight track compilation of current Swedish bands thematically loosely organized against the World Bank, and for a world without borders. With a lot of the lyrics in Svensk or not evident, it's not a heavy handed treatise on the idea, but more of a collection of great bands in support of a common cause...while at the same time proving DIY D-beat is alive and well in Sweden!!! MISAR blast sturdy classic D-beat, there's ultra-almost too "no-fi" MOB-47-ish drilling thrash from KRIMTANK, and one-two fuzzed out punk crunch that breaks into throttling thrash from SLAKTRENS, plus swirling D-beat thrash with howled vocals over buzzing guitars from ESKATOLOGIA. Modern hardcore from PASSIV DODSHJALP, who nearly pretty much makes a brutal metallic breakdown into an entire song, some really wicked death metallish-D-beat with wicked female vocals from INSIDIOUS PROCESS, a pounding, basic, new hardcore stormer from classic band MODERT LIKVIDATION and a complex, melodic and powerful modern hardcore track from END OF ALL... Great and diverse third volume in this series! 550 Pressed. (KS)
(Halvfabrikat)

V/A – "PDX Compilation Volume Two" EP

The newest volume of this series of comps from Blackwater. All the songs on here are dark post punk bangers from ARCTIC FLOWERS, MORAL HEX, BELLICOSE MINDS and FUNERAL PARADE. Lots of flangy guitars, tittering high hats and fast picking bass lines from the more gothy sound of MORAL HEX to the moody post punk of BELLICOSE MINDS to the more rough deathy punk of ARCTIC FLOWERES and FUNERAL PARADE. All these tracks are good, though the stand out for me is MORAL HEX's "Morality." The intro is long and haunting and the voice on the lady singing is haunting reminiscent of SIOUXIE. There is a distinct "accent" on the vocals of three bands on here that makes me wonder where in Portland there is a British colony. If you dig the new dark wave washing over punk, this is a great four-song comp. Every song on here is great, even if one appeared on another release. I am into it! Thanks Blackwater! (MB)
(Blackwater)

V/A – "Sciana Wishodnia – Hanah Vol. 1" CD

26 track (and almost as many bands) compilation benefit for a Polish anti-fascist organization. Can't really say much more than that about the comp, or the bands, despite the generous (and well packaged) booklet, since it's all in Polish. The bands all seem to be Polish, and range from techno-metal, to D-Beat, driving '77 punk, to excellent raging melodic metallic hardcore—standout for me, of course, is the latter, in the guise of the SABALA BACALA. Certainly, the quality is excellent throughout. And a great place, I'm guessing, to check out a snapshot of the lefty Polish punk scene in all it's varied glory... (RK)
(83)

V/A – "Terminal Decay" LP

This review needs to be read in tandem with the *Artcore* review in the zine section. The LP accompanying the zine is probably the most interesting comp to come out in a long time. In the same way that *MRR*'s *Public Safety* and *Welcome To 1984* were legitimate snapshots of a time, so this LP will become. What makes this comp so great is that it's the work of one man, rather than a collective so the variation in sounds is his tastes, and while like John Peel we don't always agree, Welly is a fiend for new music and is as happy to have the new South Wales supergroup of pensioners BAD SAM next to a bunch of spotty teenagers like AGENT ATTITUDE. There's the tribal CRASS of BURNT CROSS, old fuckers ripping your head off like ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS, Portland dark wavers ESTRANGED, peppered with a bunch of youngbloods like FRANCASO and LE REGARD. Packaging is crisp (of course). I'm often not a fan of comps but this will be a great 2012 benchmark record. (TB)
(Artcore)

V/A – "War For Freedom" LP

A benefit compilation for imprisoned revolutionaries, this compilation collects a track each from thirteen crust, grind, D-beat and hardcore bands from across the last four years of the Greek DIY and squat punk scene. There's a consistent thread of sound throughout the compilation but enough variety of diversity that it's a pretty fresh and engaging comp. In order, Επιθανάτιος Ρόγχος (DEATH RATTLE) play gravel throated pounding and dark AMEBIX / TRAGEDY style crust-core that rings and fades out with moody and requisite melodic near acoustic guitar strumming. Πορεία Στο Περιθώρειο play measured, straight forward and somewhat hypnotically repetitive hardcore similar to Polish band APATIA, Τελευταίος Αιώνας (LAST CENTURY) take a more gothically atmospheric and metallic bent crust sound, breaking into quick speed with evil shrieked vocals. CUT YOUR THROAT are more throttling, snappy fast thrash with grunted and screeched vocals, GO FILTH GO are DISCLOSE-ish D-beat hardcore with cheese grated guitar distortion and boisterous growled vocals, 21179 are relatively melodic, tinny yet very catchy punk blunted with gruff vocals. Side B is considerably more melodic, with, TOTALALITAR (note the extra " al"—it's not the Swedish band) almost reminiscent of late '80s UK Melodic punk that emerged out of the hardcore scene like DEPRAVED or CAN'T DECIDE where the intent is largely melodic but the trappings and framing are still largely all hardcore. SATAN'S REJECT are also melodic, but in a more early Lookout / Gilman Street styled basic, fun lo-fi way. I MALEDETI UBRIACONI, (which I think translates in Italian to "The Fucking Drunkards") take that Lookout /early '90s melody and combine it with a more forceful early UK hardcore feel which puts you somewhere near something like the PIST, Ασσύμετρη Απειλή (Assymetric Threat) tread a similar combination of melody and basic hardcore and again rest on that really repetitive euro crust core sound a la APATIA. BURN THE BOREDOM also have that feel of hardcore gone melodic with dual vocal sing-a-long and some '90s-ish styled breakdowns that lands it somewhere like CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, Απέχθεια (DISLIKE) are more brutal, simple measured hardcore on top of metallic riffing. Finally, RÄJAHTÄÄ ("Explode" in Finnish) take inspiration from Finnish hardcore, but mainly capture RATTUS's way the guitar drives the sound but everything else around the guitar is loose, throaty, slightly rumbly and noisy hardcore. Each band has a page with lyrics largely in Greek around the theme of the comp as well as political resistance and this is a fantastic and highly listenable comp worth seeking out. (KS)
(no contact)

V/A – "Welcome to Minneapolis" EP

It's been years since I've been out to Minneapolis, but remember it as one of the better places in the US to be a crusty. This Profane Existence comp is good corroborating evidence that the place is still fun and stinky. My favorite bands on this thing are VARIX (sneering and pissed '80s youth crew with female vocals) and KONTRASEKT (blasted out, noisy, crusty mayhem) but they all put in a strong showing. Of course this is a record for the crusty and hardcore types out there and I'd imagine that these bands' shows are a good place to have some fat, bearded dude in a vest flop his sweaty dreads on you. I just listened to the first song ("Ponx Vacation" by PONX ATTAX) again and it's a pretty great party song, even if you aren't quite one of the ponx. (BL)
(Profane Existence)

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83: myspace.com/83scianawschodniazine
Aanekkaat Asnitteet: ersulimarsuli@hotmail.com
Aborted Society: www.abortedsociety.com
Absolutes: theabsolutes@gmail.com
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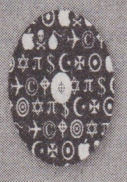

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Will Blomquist, Robert Collins, Greg Harvester, Max Levine, Kevin Manion, PRM and Mike Wilson.

1981 – This band of Finns have been darlings of these pages for quite some time, and I imagine this tape has appeared in this section during earlier pressings, but it's available again, and the punks need to know this. Flawless indie/post/anarcho punk with songs so expertly crafted that you can barely keep yourself from being sucked in. Vocal melodies imply a band much shallower than 1981, but don't let the indie leanings fool you, the aesthetic and intent are rooted in political UK anarcho punk. "Silence" is the hit, a short but very sweet number that has me reaching for the rewind button and least once per listen. Re-pressed this time in Germany, this is still great. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, ctct-records.tumblr.com)

20TH CENTURY TOKYO PRINCESS – Blown out garage crooning not that far removed from REIGNING SOUND and the like. Simple and stripped down, with an in-the-red recording that creates a noisy urgency. (Robert) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, randomoldrecords.blogspot.com)

ALPINIST – A cassette version of two excellent LPs (2010's *Lichtlærm* and 2009's *Minus.Mench*), ALPINIST are the perfect example of why melodic European hardcore is arguably more important now than it has been in years. Elements of doom and metal creep in, and their slow bits are some of the best on the tape, but their forte is lowering their heads and blazing a path through your skull. There are the melodic guitars that seem to be mandatory in this subgenre, but they are never the focus and ALPINIST don't lean on them to help limp through weak song structures, instead the songs drive the pace, and harsh vocals are the focus point until the drummer effortlessly takes center stage and then goes back to casually pummeling the listener into submission. My first impression is the same as when I saw them live: young kids reared on THE NOW DENIAL and ZEROID have upped the game substantially and made themselves a true force to be reckoned with. (Robert) (20-song cassette, lyrics included, mackeyslaw@web.de)

ANTITHEUS – Man, you can barely hear the guitar on this one. The mix is super muddy and once the drums and bass kick in the high end just gets buried. ANTITHEUS is a new band from Austin playing raw but fairly straightforward political hardcore. I'm all for bands opting for poor sound quality, but I feel like if these guys cleaned up the recording next time around their songs would pack more of a punch. Some of the arrangements sound really potent, like a mix of mysterious guy hardcore and '90s style politicore, but for the time being I can't get past the quality of the recording. (Kevin) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $2ppd from: 12905 Water Wheel Cove Austin, TX, 78729 or hatecopshc@yahoo.com)

AUTONOMY – Dark and gloriously dreary European goth punk. Eschewing polished perfection in favor of a dirty delivery, this ensemble set the tone right out of the gate, and by the time the droning "we don't want no/we don't need no gods" fades into a minimal death dirge you'll find yourself begging to be released. Your release comes in the form of raw and unpolished brilliance, steeped in a history of dark and grainy punk. Amazing. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, ctct-records.tumblr.com

BERSICKER – Fitting perfectly into the current global "raw punk" tendency, BERSICKER from the UK pummel your stereo with primitive, bass-heavy d-beat, played at a slow, deliberate tempo alongside some deliciously delayed-to-shit vocals. Lyrical themes are, you guessed it, typical crust fodder (think nuclear war and you'll be off to a warm start), but I was happy to discover the band opting for a more sideways approach than the standard shock-troops-'n'-gasmasks fare. Like any good hardcore set, this demo is way, way too short, and always ends right as I remember how fucking stoked on this band I am. (Will) (3-song CD-R, lyrics included, theonebersicker@yahoo.co.uk)

BIG BLACK CLOUD – Warp't, blaring, and discordant noise rock coming from this three-piece which, I think, hails from Portland. Sharp, almost cutting guitar explorations and wailed/moaned vocals wrap and twist through the ground laid by an insanely solid rhythm section. The drums are unrelenting and the bass channels heavy psych/stoner metals in the perfect proportion. Super solid tape; fans of being crushed by the weird should definitely track down this fine chunk of psych punk. (Max) (7-song cassette. www.stankhouserecords.com)

BILL BONDSMEN – This Detroit hardcore band dishes out six songs that got thrown to the wayside, due to a departing drummer. These songs are all getting re-recorded with the new dude, so you get these versions on a CD-R. There are some definite nods to their Midwestern forefathers, like NAKED AGGRESSION and even a little EFFIGIES, but these guys keep it choppy, aggressive and contemplative. When their songs slow down and begin to plod along, they really start to shine. Their singer has a voice that will knock you down. Pretty killer. (Greg) (6-song CD-R. No lyrics included. www.myspace.com/thebillbondsmen)

BLOOD BUDDIES – Two women playing gutsy, creeping (at times), explosive indie-punk. Their song "Self Made" is the strongest of the three, with a catchy guitar hook and loads of energy. There is definitely some early '90s grunge-worship going on here, but these ladies seem to be on the punk side of things. It comes packaged in a hand printed sleeve that is sewn together. Nice! (Greg) (3-song CD-R. www.facebook.com/bloodbuddies)

BUBONIC BEAR/HULK SMASH – HULK SMASH is a giant flying saucer that abducts the listener and injects their docile ear canals with rich layers of lumbering autotune-the-doom. It's slow, it's heavy, it's psychedelic robo-doom and it's time for you to get hip to it. BUBONIC BEAR throws some more mid-paced sludge into the mix with their side of the tape. This is dissonant, heavy music with a lot of drive to it. Overall, cool split. (Max) (6-Song Cassette, no lyrics, www.srarecords.com).

CENOBITES – I thought driving hardcore punk with crusty edges that used movie samples to identify some personal life philosophy or irony had died, but alas in Chicago it ferments! Vocals just gritty enough to match dirty sounding guitar lines and tough, fast paced drums... musical talent is obvious with the bridges and breakdowns built into the song structures. If you were ever a fan of early TRAGEDY, FROM ASHES RISE or HIS HERO IS GONE this may be for you. Stay tuned, I think it's gonna get better if they make the overall sound just a little heavier. First track, "Already Dead", is by far my favorite and the booklet included is lovely! All very '90s with the info layout and illustration placement. Pleased to see this style isn't dead! (Punk Rock Mum) (19-song CD-r Lyric booklet included, www.reverberation.com/cenobites)

CHEAP FREAKS – Energetic, jangley, psychedelic acid garage rock from Dublin, Ireland. This album is all over the place, mostly in a good way. Some songs keep my attention more than others. I am hearing many layers as I go through it. I think this is an album that would (and just might) grow on me over time if I were to listen to it more and more. A wide variety of influences can be heard—ranging from the REATARDS to the ROLLING STONES to the WIPERS to the MONKS to the REIGNING SOUND. Also definitely hear some serious krautrock influence going on as well. CHEAP FREAKS have managed to take a whole lot of music we have all heard and sort of blend it all together in a way that is their own. It works! I imagine that this band could be really fun to see live. This promo CD that was sent to us indicates this very recording is now available on 12" LP format via Big Neck Records. I recommend checking it out—I feel like a TON of people out there would (and should) be more into this band than I personally am. They are really good." (Mike) (14-song CD-R, www.cheapfreaks.net cheapfreaksmusic@yahoo.co.uk)

COOL GRAVEYARDS – Four tracks of goth/garage post punk weirdness with haunted guitars and overly self indulgent vocals that sound like the aural manifestation of a pretentious dude wearing sunglasses in a pitch black smoke filled bar. It's the beats that sell the demo—jerky and off putting, robotic dances are mandatory, single note guitars pulling your strings and catapulting you across the dance floor with the grace of a three legged gazelle. This is 1983 gone horribly wrong in all of the right ways, and my emotional barometer is teetering between intrigued and enthralled. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, Flesh Wave, 21620 Hoffman, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082, terminalgirls.bandcamp.com)

CONDITION – Awesome new LA band that toes the line between burly hardcore and raw d-beat. I know a lot people think noise punk as a whole has jumped the shark, but trust me on this one, CONDITION aren't some half-assed revival band. This is

as spacy as it is heavy and borrows from a shit ton of bands that people seem to love; DISCLOSE and NUKKEHAMMER would be good reference points. This tape is a marvelous first effort, and there's an EP on the way, so be on the lookout for this band. (Kevin) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, conditionpunx@gmail.com)

CONNOISSEUR – The absolute epitome of stoner grind. It's almost a shame that the lyrics will lead some to dismiss CONNOISSEUR as a gimmick (subject matter ranges from weed to burritos to weed to weed and then back to world burrito domination) because the riffs here are 100% epic. The slow jams are on par with the greats of the genre, and their cache of 0:30 (or less) tracks puts them in line with crushing PV elite. Prepare for punishment. (Robert) (12 song CD-R, lyrics included, dan@killthatcat.com, psychisnotdead@gmail.com)

THE CRAN TANGERINES – The first song on this CD sounds exactly like so many bands I saw in the '90s. "Whoa-oh" pop-punk parts followed by a useless ska part…complete with "pick it up!" When they stay the fuck away from the ska (which they thankfully do in all their other songs besides one), this band rips through some fast punk songs about making a change, the futility of the government and streets of anarchy. They also proclaim that their scene in Buffalo, NY is dead, which is wholly, unequivocally untrue. (Greg) (8-song CD-R. No lyrics included. crantangerines@yahoo.com)

DEAD FOR A MINUTE – This is a massive tapeography from this (I think) French band who has apparently done an awful lot over their five years of existence. DfaM plays a screamotionally-charged brand of metallic hardcore. There are blast beats, AT THE GATES-influenced riffs, and breakdowns which themselves break down into more broken down breakdowns. If that sounds like your cuppa tea, track this puppy down. (Max) (31-song tape with liner notes in French, www.deadforaminute1998-2003.blogspot.com)

DISRÄPE – Canadian raw D-beat madness with plenty of late '80s UK metalpunk undertones mingling with modern apocalypse crust. Whether by design or accident, they have managed to create a discomforting vibe with the high end distortion, not like the typical wash of white hiss, but legitimately creepy, and it works in their favor. The black clad set will eat this for lunch. (Robert) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, Steve. Livermoree88@gmail.com)

DOLL FIGHT! – Revolution Doll Style Now – Ew this tape came with a press kit with a cover letter and a promo "one-sheet" thingy…I'll spare you the details. So, DOLL FIGHT! are from Vermont and wear some Riot Grrrl influences on their sleeves, as well as incorporating some weird stuff of their own. One song even has a xylophone part, which I guiltily admit I kinda liked. They bring to mind SLEATER KINNEY with some herky-jerky moments, and even some more indie sounding stuff like the BREEDERS. Those are just reference points though! They seem like nice ladies with some decent ideas, but I think they're trying to make it, and they're just not going to I'm afraid. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, www.dollfight.com)

EFFLUXUS – Second demo from the flag bearers of San Francisco noise punk, this time featuring a beefed up lineup and more punishing versions of two songs from the first effort. It was good before, but EFFLUXUS have turned into a juggernaut of lightning speed raw hardcore, mutilating UK riffs and turning the mangled remains into a symphony. Highly recommended. (Robert) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, PO Box 22367, San Francisco, CA 94122)

ESTINZIONE VOLONTARIA – "Due Minuti D'odio" – Thrashing Italian hardcore with really harsh vocals. Like, high pitched tight-throated DROP-DEAD vocals…not my thing. Other than that I like the melodies on "Un Altro Giorno". Ok, now my main complaint here is this demo has only two songs, it's on a 100 minute tape, and each side has one song… this does not permit easy multiple listenings. To give them the benefit of the doubt, they're from a town in Italy called Novi Ligure where they claim is difficult to do a hardcore band because there's nowhere to play or record. The lyrics are translated to English and are thoughtful and honest, and admittedly inspired by Orwell's 1984. They're recording for an LP later this year, and after all is said and done, I'd be interested in hearing it. (Matt) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/573904557)

FAMILY STONED – This demo finds FAMILY STONED expanding from a base of fuzzy garage rock into more cosmic dimensions, hopping between the throbbing pulse of krautrock and the bedroom psych of '80s revivalists the RAIN PARADE without getting stuck too long on any one particular kick. I got really stoked at one point on what sounded like a perfect homage to the homespun glory of NEIL YOUNG's best work, only to quickly realize I was in fact listening to a cover of his "Helpless." Ha! This tape feels like a lazy Olympia summer full of bongwater stains and faint, sentimental memories. Highly recommended, recommended for the high. (Will) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, thefamilystonedolympia@gmail.com)

FINAL SEED – The label describes this as "monster weird," and I am inclined to agree with them. Solo recordings and sound treatments from a PUFFY AREOLAS member, creeped out drug induced dark room and a cloudy night sounds presented live to cassette. Like a soundtrack to a really off putting day, "Finally Live" slowly soaks into you—whether by intelligent design or pure dumb luck, these sounds are amazing. (Robert) (?-song cassette, no lyrics, $7ppd, H. Moerland, 1674 Bradford St., Grand Rapids, MI 49503, fagtapes.blogspot.com, fagtapes@hotmail.com)

THE FLOOR ABOVE – Noisy and fukkd blasts of basic lo-fi mania with, total ADD hardcore with most songs clocking in well under 30 seconds. Tuneless and abrasive, but still there's a vibe that suggests southern melodic punk in their pasts (this is just a hunch, and certainly not suggested by these harsh offerings). Their sound is frustrated, adolescent and arguably more punk than anything I've heard this demo cycle, fans of primitive and only marginally ept punk take note. (Robert) (12-song cassette, no lyrics, $2 or trade % Chad, 3804 Baxter Ave., Nashville, TN 37216)

FUCK EYES – Terminal Girls/Flesh Wave have a penchant for "releasing" short CD-R demos with minimal artwork and a complete lack of energy put into the overall presentation. But as much as that turns me off, the music they share is consistently awesome. Enter FUCK EYES, four tunes of SPITS / REATARD drenched garage punk with hooks galore. It's rare that I say it, but I think they will benefit from higher fidelity on future recordings, these tunes are too solid to hide behind those washed out cymbals. An unexpected treat, highly recommended. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, Flesh Wave, 21620 Hoffman, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082, terminalgirls.bandcamp.com)

THE GASHOLES – Urgent and pissed hardcore from a wasteland molested by corporate interests. The GASHOLES (name taken from the after affects of fracking) take rust belt frustration and turn it into mandatory hardcore punk dirges—I support. (Robert) (8-song CD-R, lyrics included, www.facebook.com/thegasholes)

HARD SKIN – Cassette version of the mandatory *We're The Fucking George* record from the world's greatest Oi! band. Collecting tracks from a few years' worth of singles and splits, this highlights tongue in cheek street punk that has more nuts than anything they try to take the piss out of. "Make My Tea" is on here, as are "We Are The Wankers," "Black and White Unite and Fight" and a slew of other crucial lager slinging records…if you don't know the band then it's time to get with it, and if you need to listen to these anthems on an antiquated boutique format, then Bob's yer uncle. (Robert) (19-song cassette, no lyrics, ctct-records.tumblr.com)

HERMANASTRA – Hailing from Spain, HERMANASTRA bring you their simple-yet-effective take on punk with a split female/male vocal attack. Most of the songs stick to a mid-tempo approach, but when they slow it down, they start to take on a DEAD MOON feel that is most welcome. For the bulk of this CD, they keep it fast and simple. The recording is inexplicably bookmarked by two instrumentals that go nowhere and do absolutely nothing to enhance the listening experience. (Greg) (10-song CD-R. Lyrics included. hermanastrcorreo@gmail.com)

HOOKERS MADE OUT OF COCAINE – A sigh of disappointment and an eye-roll from me on this band's name and the title of their practice space demo, *Whoricane*. What we have here is a drum/bass two-piece that play catchy, sometimes-sludgy punk with both members singing (mostly) in unison. Without being a throwback band in any sense, this has a distinctive punk-turning-into-hardcore vibe that had me thinking of Southern California in the early '80s. Half of the song names are seemingly arbitrary combinations of numbers and letters (e.g. S-319), suggesting these are working titles, or perhaps something weirder, I really couldn't tell you. (Will) (7-track CD-R, no lyrics included, donovantroth@aim.com)

HOPELESS DESTROYERS – This is upbeat punk 'n' roll from Kansas City, MO with a singer who screams lots so "Oh's and "Yeah's" like the guy from NEW BOMB TURKS. It veers into punk-bar rock territory at times, but this is better than a lot of that bullshit. (Greg) (9-song CD-R. No lyrics included. bisforbrittain@yahoo.com)

INGROWN – Woah! This is pretty insane sounding thrashy hardcore from Pennsylvania with a very dark slant. The bass and guitar play these weird minor off-key combinations that sound utterly haunting and grotesque! I can't tell if it's intentional, but I love it! Angry diatribes spit forth almost secondary or in the background to the disharmonic music. A photo on the inside shows this three piece hanging around in the graveyard, which is honestly quite fitting to the sounds on this tape. Think WRETCHED meets SEX/VID with some added darkness. I'm ready to hear more! (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Aaron, 50 Ridge Valley Rd, Ottsville, PA 18942)

THE INSTIGATION – I got a CD-R of hardcore from Shanghai! Featuring players from China, Japan, California, and England (I think?), the INSTIGATION play fast rock-riffed hardcore with distorted vocals that are sung much in the way Ron from ACID REFLUX delivers his shoutings. Guitars have low gain Hendrix-bluesy tone, incorporating subtle MOTORHEAD-ish leads mixed with straightforward US

styled hardcore. They cover "Red Tape" by CIRCLE JERKS and "Degeneration" by REAGAN YOUTH, which should give you a taste of their influences. For some reason I keep thinking of that band BREAKfAST from Japan, but without the thrash element. Instead of art/packaging they included some stickers and another CD-R containing photos, credits, and a live video from a show they played in Fukuoka, Japan. Cool! (Matt) (14-track CD-R, no lyrics, toshipunk@gmail.com)

LIE STILL – Furiously grinding powerviolence with the kind of throaty vocals that conjure images of a maniacal mutant belting out these songs because suicide and prison are the only other viable options. Fast as shit, and smashes face first into a wall for the slow parts. Eleven songs in seven minutes, awesome. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, pkore@aol.com, liestill@yahoo.com)

LIGHT BRIGADE – Yes!! An excellent modern day incarnation of early Rough Trade-era post punk, jerky songs fervently and (sometimes clumsily) presented with disjointed guitar and studious female vocals. LIGHT BRIGADE have a studious, nerdy air (nicking lyrics from Cummings and Li Shangyin reinforce this impression), belying the clean guitar that screams DEAD MILKMEN in constant opposition to the rest of the music. The music feels instantly comfortable, engaging and familiar, but dig deeper and there's a musical depth to songs like "Eerie Railroad" that is undeniable. Five stars, or whatever the highest ranking is…this Portland band nail it. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 1113, Portland OR 97207)

LITTLE MISS AND THE NO NAMES – Brash, smarmy, and fun as all hell, LITTLE MISS AND THE NO NAMES channel the gritty-yet-poppy glory of first-wave U.S. hardcore to full effect on this debut release. Hailing from Boise, Idaho, this band has a couple members of SEPTIC DEATH, though you'd probably never guess that from this recording. This tape took me a few listens to warm up to, but I've had the "Small Town, Small Minds" line from "Scene Hick" stuck in my head for about four weeks now and it's not showing any sign of moving on. (Will) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, headbonesmerch@gmail.com)

LOS TOMADOS – Scummy LA punks offering up some lo-fi, fucked up skate-thrash for the fuckin' kids. "21st Century Sucks" could be an anthem for the punks; "There's new technology everyday! It hurts my head anyway!" Nothing too deep here…just some kids yelling about being punks, being young and getting fucked up. Not one song is over two minutes long. Killer! (Greg) (8-song CD-R. No lyrics included. xfotosynthx@yahoo.com)

MERRY GO ROUND – Older hardcore punk from Himeji, Japan. The CD included has a live set from 1985 plus six studio recorded songs from around the same time. Musically it is fairly forgettable, but not that bad. Some pretty average hardcore, mostly mid tempo. Having never heard this band before, I could do without the mediocre live set. The studio stuff is decent though. Nice and unpolished. Also included is a DVD of a more recent show in 2011. This DVD is pretty bad, unless maybe you are already a fan of this band and know their stuff. They are all old and dressed very punk playing a show at some poorly attended bar. They sound worse than they did in the '80s, as you might expect of an aging hardcore punk band. They sound and look very street punk at this point and also do all sorts of cheesy bar rock metal moves. If you are specifically super into Japanese hardcore, MERRY GO ROUND might be worth your time, but to me mediocre hardcore is the same no matter where it's from. (Mike) (?-song CD-R/DVD, Suginamik Matunoki 1-12-35-712 Zip 166-0014 Japan Tokyo)

MUNCHAUSEN – Lo-fi scum punk from Philly featuring a member of PAINT IT BLACK (which I never would have guessed). As far as their sound goes, think of FRESH MEAT or maybe LEATHER (but much more raw). The first couple tracks are really good punk 'n' roll, and by that I don't mean to imply that they sound like they should be on In The Red, cause this is definitely a step above most of the drivel that label puts out. It's dirty, beer-soaked, memorable stuff. Conversely, the last few tracks are much darker and dirgier and almost CONDOMINIUM-esque. MUNCHAUSEN is certainly more of a basement band than a bar band; their songs have hooks, but are also little more than filthy reverberations at times. Either way, I'm into it. (Kevin) (5-song cassette, no lyrics, munchausenphilly.bandcamp.com)

NAPOLNARIZ – Here we have a live set from this Puerto Rican punk band from December of last year. NAPOLNARIZ play catchy sing along mid tempo punk rock sung in Spanish. They sound fun, and the songs sound well written, but I would like to hear a proper demo recoding or a record. A rough live recording of a band I've never heard before just doesn't do it for me. (Matt) (9-song cassette, no lyrics, T-K Tapes, 2538 Beaufort Ave, Toledo, OH 43613, lcodrnr@hotmail.com)

NEO NUNS – Dirty and heavy punk rock 'n' roll with a distinct but indescribable Cleveland vibe. I can easily imagine a lot of blood at their shows, and alcohol…definitely alcohol. Raw and ugly. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, 4431 Hank Ave., Austin, TX 78745)

NEON PISS – Recorded back in 2010 and now on it's third pressing, this tape has managed to escape the review section due to the absentminded nature of one otherwise brilliant reviewer until now. The excitement is still palpable as I reach for the play button, even though I have listened to this tape 100 times, and as the dark intro to "Golden State Advantage" starts I just sink into the sounds. NEON PISS is honest and pure punk, and while there are elements of older sounds (I hear RUTS, WIPERS, even THE DAMNED creeping through their fingers), the sum of the parts here is something genuine and special. These bands don't come around too often, and thankfully there are vinyl releases in store for 2012. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 72471, Oakland, CA 94612, pissingneonpiss@gmail.com, ctct-records.tumblr.com)

NONA – NONA are from Westchester Pennsylvania but play some nice Florida flavored pop punk with edgy female vocals. Not really my specialty, but this sounds really good. It's in the same camp as THIS IS MY FIST. Here ya get four bouncy melodic tunes and one short acoustic number. If you dig reading Cometbus zine and prefer records released by No Idea, don't miss this one. (Matt) ($4 ppd, 5-song cassette, lyrics included, Trashy Tapes c/o Zach Smith, 200 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)

THE ONETIMERS – Hailing from Chattanooga, TN, this band gets a lot of inspiration from LEATHERFACE and SNUFF, but injects enough of their own style into it so that they don't sound like a carbon copy of those bands. Straight-forward, guitar heavy and carried by strong vocals, this builds on the history of Region Rock and takes it in a different level altogether. Features members of the MORONS, CRACKROCK and QUEERWULF. (Greg) (4-song tape. Lyrics included. 1103 Highland Drive, Chattanooga, TN 37405)

PIZZA PARTY MASSACRE – Do you like rudimentary, fast punk songs with screamy vocals about the pain of having to wait on a pizza? How about songs about being killed by a beast with 1000 eyes (instead of 20) or blacking out or controlling a personal army of birds (whoa...what?)? Add that to the hot-shit guitar solos and punishing female vocals and this might be your new jam. (Greg) (11-song CD-R. No lyrics included. bisforbrittain@yahoo.com)

PLIANT – This DC/Amherst, MA four piece play downtuned crust with mic-in-the-mouth, "rah-rah-rah" dinosaur vocals. The recording is pretty low-fi and raw which doesn't really showcase any sort of special dynamic this band might have. Doesn't do too much for me, but perhaps they'll blow your face off live. Oh yea, and they crustify a NIRVANA song. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, pliantpunx.bandcamp.com)

POTBOILER – "Rolling Boil" – This tape compiles everything released and unreleased by this now-defunct upstate New York band and, check this shit out, I like it a lot. There are some hints of LATTERMAN and even THE INSURGENT going on here, but POTBOILER is definitely their own band. They dish out 11 frenetic, earnest pop-punk songs culled from their various 7"s, a compilation and the scrap pile, but there's not a snoozer among them. Totally great. (Greg)(11 song tape. Lyrics included. www.deadbrokerecords.com)

PRIMITIVE HEARTS – "Poppy garage rock 'n' roll punk from Oakland. Emphasis on the "garage" more so than the "punk." This tape is good! Nothing ground breaking (a bit generic) but it is fun, catchy, and poppy. This style of retro garage / pop / punk I am generally rather picky about, and this is done pretty well. Nice and easy lo-fi listening. For fans of the RAMONES, the BEACH BOYS, KINKS, and the SONICS. And it appears this band dresses up as Mexican professional wrestlers? I suppose that's pretty cool... (Mike) (5-song cassette, PO Box 3447 Oakland CA 94609 theprimitivehearts@gmail.com primitivehearts.com)

PROLETARIAT PUNCH – Straightforward political-as-fuck hardcore punk. Sounds like these kids have listened to their fair share of crusty HC from '80s England, and pull the sound off well on this tape. There are a good number of parts that weirdly straddle the line between reggae-inflected UK dark punk and a moshy breakdown. I don't quite get that, but whatever. Overall this is a solid crusty hardcore tape with lyrics about how capitalism, the state, the pigs, empire, and all the other usual suspects suck a lot. Word. (Max) (9-Song cassette, lyrics included, www.recluserecords.net)

PROTO REGIME – Unstoppable, face-melting hardcore from this brand new Bay Area band. Mix a bit of crossover, some thrash and a hint of metal, ensure all the riffs are top-notch, then get a crazed banshee to provide the vocals and you end up with a demo as rad as this one. PROTO REGIME channels the best bits of bands like RKL and HOLIER THAN THOU? while still sounding fresh and firmly rooted in the present day. This is some unruly stuff and I can't wait to hear more. (Kevin) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, gzuscamp@yahoo.com)

THE RAZOR SMILEZ – This is for fans of the CASUALTIES brand of punk. Super tight male and female vocals meld wonderfully with well played sing-a-long and dance-whilst-spilling-a-cider-in-your-hand punk. The demo cover art is bright and

youthful, very fitting for its style. Much better than TILT or the DISTILLERS but just not rough enough for some of us. (Punk Rock Mum) (13-songs CD-r, No lyrics included, razorsmilez@myspace.com)

RATMASK – This tape is also brought to you by Drug Party Tapes. This one is pretty unhinged and dismal hardcore from Buffalo/Syracuse, bringing to mind COLD SWEAT at times, mostly due to the maniacal vocals and combination of fast parts and slow rhythmic drum breakdown parts. The overall tone/theme of this demo is very, very negative and uncomfortable. It doesn't have nice hooks for you to comfortably cling to. Hardcore for the disturbed. (Matt) ($3.50 ppd, 7-song cassette, lyrics included, Stephen Floyd, 527 Massachusetts Ave, Rear Upper, Buffalo, NY 14213)

REPLICA – Five song demo from the best new hardcore band in the Bay Area! There's a special energy when these four musicians come together live and create a convincing racket, and this demo is no less satisfying. Dharma's vocals are truly angry and dynamic, and are backed by inventive drumming and solid hardcore riffs. The sound falls somewhere in between TALK IS POISON and HARUM SCARUM—it's that good. (Matt) (5-song cassette, no lyrics, http://r-e-p-l-i-c-a.bandcamp.com)

RICKY C. QUARTET – Snotty rock 'n' roll bands take note: Deliver your goods with this much swagger or don't fukkn bother. Tons of classic UK punk sweeping through the booze soaked riffing, like SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS reincarnated on the In The Red roster. Smoking and killer. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.therickycquartet.com)

ROBBIN' PAIN – This has all of the trite cock rock elements of a snotty '77 UK wanna be band that I would hate/dismiss. But this is a band that is ruling my night—UK meets "77 New York in the two thousand teens and makes adult drenched punk with songs called "Bagel And A Coffee," "I Need A Hobby," and the best song on the demo: "Piece Of Shit." On the one hand, this is watered down UK punk, but on the other hand it is undeniably awesome. (Robert) (10-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.trunkrock.com, rickdalcortivo@gmail)

ROTTER – Raw and relentless kvlt metal/punk. These are not pretty sounds, high end distortion barely masks the fury, and when they slow down just enough to highlight a charging HC riff, then look out. Those with weak tickers need not apply, this one is painful. (Robert) (7-song CD-R/cassette, lyrics included, $3ppd, 1495 Golden Gate Ave. #305, San Francisco, CA 94115, rikkchips@gmail.com)

SCUM – Nuclear Winter – Noisy crust from Michigan without an ounce of originality. The layout is appropriately fashioned with stuff like war images, CONFUSE lettering, and the crossed out musical note "noise" symbol. Add a DISCHARGE cover and a song sung in Finnish and you should have a pretty good idea what you're getting here. If you don't mind another predictable DISCLOSE / FRAMTID / CONFUSE / DISORDER clone, then snatch this up; but sorry, I'm bored of it. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, dbeatrawscum@yahoo.com, Ryan Helme, 263 W Tacoma, Clawson, MI 48017)

SHAME – A churning bulldozer turning the earth at your feet, these four tracks are pure brutality in the form of modern crust. None of the melodic niceties, SHAME instead choose doom laden heaviness to accentuate their attack. Based on nothing more than a hunch, I would guess that these tunes are played by metalheads, but that is merely an observation, not a criticism—devastating. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, mattlohutchinson@yahoo.com)

THE SHIVERING BRIGADE – Imagine BLATZ reincarnated as a garage goth band with a violin and a saw. It's weird, which I think is the goal. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, $5ppd, Nicola Nonesuch. 29 Meserole St., Apt 1F, Brooklyn, NY 11206)

SUGAR STAINS – Driving rock and roll with syrupy sweet and arguably over emphasized female vocals. They lost me when they quit the "driving" part of my initial descriptor, starting to sound like HOLE without the hooks. Meh. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

TENDRIL – Noisy and tormented guitar heavy punk dirges that fall somewhere between NATION OF ULYSSES, SCRATCH ACID and FLIPPER. Snarling vocals highlight a decidedly lo-fi delivery of some quite abrasive sounds, punctuated by piercing guitars ripped out of the early '90s. With subsequent listens, this goes from good to great. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, tensionheadrecords@gmail.com)

TONY JONES & THE CRETIN 3 – One half hour of brainless rock and roll recorded live in NYC. Bands like CRAMPS, MISFITS and CHUCK BERRY are to blame for bands like this roaming the earth, searching in vain for a fanbase made up of people not obligated by past (or hopefully future) drunken sexual interludes with the members of the band. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, tonyjones@cbgb.net)

TOTAL WAR – Before you start throwing up your arms and mumbling about how this noisy raw punk shit has gotten out of hand and there's nothing relevant about a bunch of kids aping Swedish and Japanese noise mongers who were in turn just aping DISCHARGE, listen to TOTAL WAR. Faster and more pissed than anything you'll find in these pages this month, these Canadians bash through eight tunes in a heartbeat, absolutely crushing everything in their path. The riffs are simple and in your face, but are presented with a seldom matched fury that leaves me shaking my head (and flipping the tape faster then you can say "what the fukk was that?!") and I would happily put TOTAL WAR in league with any number of the legends that people might drop as comparisons. The region specific will peg this as Scandi-crust worship (MOB 47 drips off of this tape), I just call it amazing. Mind: Blown. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 21530. 1424 Commercial Dr., Vancouver BC V5L-5G2 CANADA, distortvancouver@gmail.com)

TOXIC REVOLUTION – Metallic fastcore from Germany. The highlights might be when they slow it down—legitimately epic sounds, but perhaps this is because the fast is so relentless that you need a breather every few songs. An excellent collision of heavy downtuned Eurocrust and blistering US thrash. (Robert) (26-song cassette, no lyrics, mackeyslaw@web.de, chrisapproach@gmx.net)

UNREST – Relentless, driving European crust. Pure power harnessed into a simple black cassette shell, accentuated by bursts of double bass and blasts of grinding mania but always falling back on adrenaline fueled black clad brilliance. Think HIATUS on speed…I mean, I'm sure that HIATUS were on speed, I just mean to imply that UNREST are cut from the same mold, but faster and slightly more metallic. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, mackeyslaw@web.de, unrest@gmx.net)

THE UPTIGHTS – "At the Wörthersee Hotel" – I think this is what people are referring to as "shoegaze"?? It's lo-fi with distorted drums and vocals and kinda dreamy guitars, and bits of noise and effects, but nothing harsh. There's a little post punk influence in there I guess. I can tap my foot to some of the more rockin' parts, but I mostly just don't have the patience for this. Maybe if I was a pothead I would gaze at my shoes and like this stuff more… (Matt) (9-song cassette, no lyrics, keepsecretrecords.net)

UTAH JAZZ – Punk from Buffalo NY on Drug Party Tapes with members of BROWN SUGAR and MAYDAY. Upbeat with fuzzy wet rockin' guitars and the good ole' woman/man trade off vocals. At first it reminds me of BLATZ but more together and in tune. Then I think of TYRADES but it's a little less angular and more straightforward. It's definitely a party, probably a great live band. Melody's vocals, the main highlight for me, prove to be very dynamic throughout the demo. Nice one. (Matt) ($3.50 ppd, 8-song cassette, no lyrics, utahjazz666.blogspot.com, Stephen Floyd, 527 Massachusetts Ave, Rear Upper, Buffalo, NY 14213)

WIFI – This is an almost unlistenable side project by members of SWITCHBLADE SIEGE and possibly LOS TOMADOS (featured elsewhere in this section). The songs are not bad, but the recording quality is atrocious, which is saying a lot for me…many of my favorite bands are featured on tapes that have to be listened to at top volume to be audible. Within this terrible recording, I can make out some lo-fi dancey punk and distorted pop in the vein of a less talented PHARMACY. The cover of this proclaims "Will make you dance and puke at the same time!!" Well, yes…maybe so. (Greg) (4-song CD-R. No lyrics included. xfotosynthx@yahoo.com)

YADOKAI – San Francisco's finest Japanese hardcore export continue their dark and mysterious journey to becoming one of the most intense bands on the planet. Reared on classic riff driven late '80s Japanese perfection, these three songs turn the screws on the hardcore paradigm and use their influences as a starting point instead of using emulation as an end. Absolutely relentless, featuring one track from their recent EP, this is mandatory. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, no contact info)

V/A – SAC Anthology 1999-2004 – This is an easy one. Get this tape!! Great comp of all Sacramento CA bands from 1999-2004. Lots of classic stuff here. Sacramento has produced a specific breed of punk / pop / garage bands over the past 25 years or so that all somehow have a similar feel. This tape is a great representation of the "Sacramento sound" that we all know and love. I would say that the BANANAS are the band of this category that is the most well known. They have a fantastic song on here, an earlier song of theirs called "Mr. Octopus Is Dead." Not every band sounds the same though—two bands stand out as being particularly different (PETS and the GYNAS), but all the tracks flow together really nicely. My personal favorites of this tape include the BANANAS, THE FOUR EYES, MILHOUSE USA (I forgot how good that band was!), ROCK THE LIGHT, and HORNY MORMONS. But there is definitely no filler here—every band is at least good, if not great. This tape, however, is by no means a definitive all time Sacramento comp (*see SEWER TROUT, NAR, POUNDED CLOWN, LIZARDS, LOS HEUVOS, etc), but it is a great start to one. (Mike) (24-song cassette, Charles Albright 331 21st St., Sacramento CA 95811)

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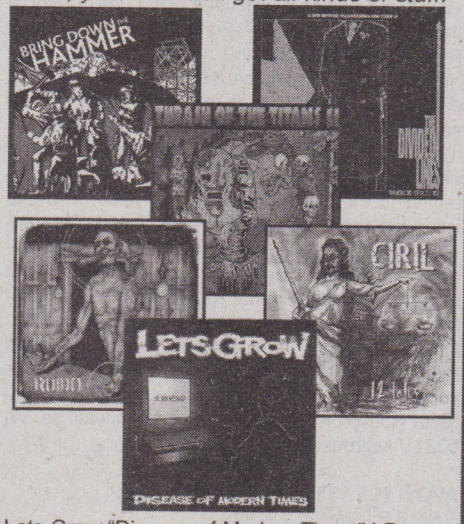

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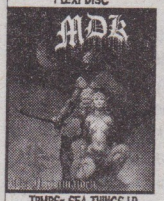

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(AA) Ariel Amend-All
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booze
(EC) E.Conner
(AE) Amelia Eakins
(FF) Francesca Foglia
(DG) Dan Goetz
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(BG) Bob Goldie
(SL) Sam Lefebvre
(BL) Brad Lambert
(MM) Marissa Magic
(KM) Kevin Manion
(JM) Jeff Mason
(LP) Langford Poh
(CR) Casey Ress
(KR) Keith Riley

ACCEPT THE DARKNESS #8 / $4 US $5 World
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
Shiva is a great writer and I am always super stoked when I get his zines for review… He can write about the most obvious over played record and make you think about it in a different manner, total psycho music freak out obsessive at work who can put that feeling into words!? Not many have the skill, this human clearly does. I feel like you should just send off for all his zines irrespective of whatever some chump reviewer in *MRR* has to say. They are set up like a traditional music zine, some rants, interviews, reviews, but what sets it apart is the quality of the writing and his ability at such a young age to put his personality onto the page… This apparently is the last issue that is gonna emerge from his current suburban existence, moving out of the parental abode!? Psyched to see what the future holds for this kid! At any rate, blah blah blah, this issue has interviews with Condominium, D X, former *MRR* columnist and creator of the incomparable and much replicated *Distort*, this interview done in that context of that zine and also of Total Control. There's a Brown Sugar interview too. All of these interviews read like conversations, the questions asked are thoughtful and demand more than a five word response from their subjects. So send off for this and fucking step your game up punks! (LG)
61 The Terrace / Ketonah, NY 10536 / eggmangel@gmail.com

AGONY BAG Vol. 1 / #3 ppd US, $4 ppd World
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
Reading the cover listing the content of this zine told me that I was going to either love or hate this zine. This is pretty much right up my ally. There is a Good Vibrations records article in which the author of this zine goes through the first batch of GV releases, an ode to Inepsy, a section called "Boot Music" waxing on his appreciation for specific EPs by the Violators and Subculture, the "flashback zone" with reprints of an old review of Discharge *Why* from *Sounds*, interview from Crucifix and Iconoclast from *Flipside* February 1984 issue. One of the oldest band shirts I have is a Venom shirt. It's comfortable, filled with worn holes and still looks great on my rack, which is the shirt I was wearing when I pulled this out of my mailbox at *MRR*. Low and behold, there is a killer appreciation article about Venom singles in this zine, which is an earnest account of why Venom's whole catalog is still amazing. No ironic or camp shit here, just straight love and appreciation. There is also a Book reviews section [!!!!!] covering *Destroy All Movies* and *Ta Yeule*. Thank you Agony Bag. This is a good looking zine with lots of photos, large text, a flyer spread and good use of black and white patterns and space. I would love to have a conversation with this guy about music, because we definitely have an appreciation for the same type of music. The writing style in here is honest, not self-conscious by any means yet very positive and funny. Great zine. (MB)
Matt Smith / 653 Classon Ave. #4B / Brooklyn, NY 11238 / msmith7904@yahoo.com

AVOW #24 / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48pgs
This rad zine is now coming to us from Milwaukee, which if you didn't know, is Algonquin for "The Good Land." The gentleman behind *Avow* is Keith Rosson, and he is an excellent writer (and artist) with a strong sense of self. It doesn't matter if he's reminiscing about a teacher that had a profound impact on his life, talking about the slightly soul-crushing process of seeking a job in a new city, or informing his readers how difficult it is to quit smoking, his writing (and accompanying artwork) is always engaging and memorable. The only interview in this edition is with Joe Lachut (the creator of the zine *Seven Inches To Freedom*), and it's a good read. Then, there are the record "reviews." I put "reviews" in quotes because some of them don't actually discuss the bands or their respective musical outputs at all. The better ones are abstract; he might tell a story that vaguely involves a certain album, or just convey a feeling he receives from listening to the music. All-in-all, the reviews in this issue are some of the best I've ever read. The general tone of *Avow* is truly remarkable; it's comforting. Informative mags are one thing, but what makes *Avow* great is that Keith is able to successfully relate how he channels the excruciating minutiae of everyday life into something positive and tangible while simultaneously ignoring death's chilly breath on the back of his neck. (KM)
Keith Rosson / 1725 E. Linnwood / Milwaukee, WI 53211/ keithrosson.com

AVOW #25 / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40pgs
A milestone issue of *Avow*; it's dubbed "Remnants" and is a collection of Keith's (the creator) old columns from *Heartattack, Give Me Back* and *Razorcake* as well as a few newer pieces he's contributed to various zines. While the writing isn't quite as striking as his more recent work, there are certainly some standouts: a review of a Taxpayers album, a column about how punks are becoming increasingly illiterate, and musings on the apathy that often seems to engulf the punk world. Though this isn't as impeccable as the last issue I reviewed, *Avow* is mandatory reading if you still have any interest in zines. (KM)
Keith Rosson / 1725 E. Linnwood / Milwaukee, WI 53211 / keithrosson.com

BACKWAVES #1 / Stamps?Trades?Cool mix tapes?
4.5x4 – 14 pgs – copied
A mini zine by a sixteen year old girl from Canada about *Sweatin to the Oldies!* It's a full breakdown of the VHS series, with reviews of Richard Simmons' dialogue, Richard and the extras' clothing choices, and choice most hilarious moments outlined and a detailed report of the set design and insane sounding workout moves. This is goofy and fun, and the sort of thing you are supposed to do when you are a bored teenager, so if you want some cheap entertainment that is charming and hilarious send Alanna some stamps or a cool trade! Make your own zine about thrift store record covers or something! (LG)
Pukeyparty.tumblr.com

BLACK FLAG #234 / £3
8.75 x 12 – printed – 40 pgs
The front half of this venerable British anarchist rag looks at the recent riots in England and mass responses in Spain and Italy to austerity plans. The back half is more history, insurrections and organizations from years past. There are some print reviews, including one whuppin' on Hugo Chavez. Word. A recurring piece is what certain professions would have to offer in a post-revolutionary world; graphic design is examined this issue. If this isn't already your milieu, I'm not sure this issue will fill you with revolutionary fervor. I felt like the historical pieces were better than the current-day ones, which isn't optimal. The US distributor address they list is out of date and has been for ten years or so. I'm certainly sympathetic to *Black Flag*—there is a ton of material and no advertisements, but I wouldn't invest three quid in this one. (JM)
BM Hurricane / London Wc1N 3XX / UK / blackflagmag@yahoo.co.uk

LA CIUDAD MAS FEA DEL MUNDO #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16 pgs – Spanish
This is an anarchist punk zine from Caracas Venezula. It's a rad music zine whose author, aptly named Cabeza de Vaca, delivers content about music while simultaneously theorizing his own views on punk. If that description isn't explicit enough let me just say that the first full article is called "That Punk in Caracas Rests in Peace," maybe that is an indicator of what is to come. There are some strong opinions in here and they are all worth reading. He talks about how punk and anarchy could have been possible in Caracas, but how in his hostile and degrading city, the scene has become a degrading caricature where punks do not stick together. Even though his personal account sounds pessimistic, it is not. He is still fighting to make the place he lives a better one through the lens of punk. I also love his article about his opin-

ion that if you start a band with the intent to sound "like" another band, the band will be shit and die. I have the same opinion and frankly his call for letting your influences emerge rather than recreating them is a great one. He also discusses the EP from La Terminal that came out a while back and why it is killer with a list of other records that he thinks are just as good. It's cut and paste with a mix of typed and handwritten text, good photos and a bit of collage. This is a rad zine and I really recommend other Spanish language readers or beginners to trade some zines with this guy or send him a few bucks, because he has some interesting things to say. Great fucking zine, (MB)
Rafael Manrique / Apt.69447 / Altamira 1062 / Caracas, Venezuela

THE DAY I STOPPED BEING PUNK / $3
4 x 5 – copied – 22 pgs
Siue's story is similar to many of us who find ourselves pushed to the sidelines of punk: she's edge, but her scene is a drunken sausage party, full of dudes who'd rather knock around in the pit than have their good time ruined by any real discussion of privilege. At 36, she grudgingly leaves "punk" behind—teaming up with a comic artist to illustrate this zine she wrote about her departure. Given my experiences, I was gearing up to sympathize with a familiar, if disappointing, tale of what happens when you feel you've outgrown the subculture that radicalized you. Unfortunately, while her collaborator's talents shine through, Siue's fails to coherently arrive at a reason why she "stopped being punk." (FF)
Siue Moffat / 538 Roxton Rd. / Toronto, ON Canada M66 3R4 / bk913@ncf.ca

DEMECIA #4 /?
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 52 pgs – Portuguese
This Brazilian zine is chock full of grind, PV and metallic leaning delights ranging from interviews with Expurgo and label Terrotten to a monumental amount of reviews. This is the most review dense zine of this length I think I have ever seen. Gawddamnman! I am limited by my comprehension of the language, but from what I deciphered, the reviews are well thought out and detailed as well as the interviews. The author of this zine loves what he listens to and worked extremely hard to bring it to us. Keep up the good work! (MB)
Renan Falero / C.P. 8080 / POA, RS / 90200-971 / Brazil

DILETTANTES & HEARTLESS MANIPULATORS #120 / Free
4.25 x 2.75 – copied – 6 pgs
This is a teeny-tiny, pocket-sized publication that poetically describes this Australian writer's trip to the states for a road trip with other zinesters, reading their writing along the way. The writer describes a sense of regret, in terms of not enjoying the moment enough, not exploring as much as they would've liked, during these travels. That makes sense, but, on the other hand, at least, they were able to make a zine out of it. (KR)
Spurzine / PO Box 41 / Flinders Lane / Victoria, Australia 8009

DWELLING PORTABLY COLLECTION #5 / $4
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 56 pgs
Head back to the land with this collection of tips and musings by some weirdos in a cabin somewhere in Oregon. This is several of the more recent DP and AB printed and stapled together with a cute pink and brown cover. If you're unfamiliar with these zines you're in for a real treat. Typewritten completely and peppered by clear diagrams and building plans. There are some interesting political rants in this batch. I wanna meet y'all! Do you ever come to California for weed brownies? Let me do a residency on your land. I will help you kill a cougar and pickle its innards!!!!! Contact me: E. Conner c/o *Maximum Rocknroll* (EC)
Lisa Ahne / PO BOX 181 / Alsea, OR 97324 / juliesummerseatssensibly@yahoo.com

FIFTH ESTATE Vol. 47, No.1, #386, Spring 2012 / $4 world, contact them for trades
8.5 x 11 – printed – 48 pgs
This seasoned anarchist publication, out of Detroit, is focused mostly on present-day struggles, not that history is ignored. There are updates on the post-action legal struggles of several activists, and the cover story is on the Occupy protests. A contributor posits that tattoos and piercings can help kill the cop inside us, and another weighs the value of a particular brand of computer product in destroying society. Since every piece of information transmitted electronically can be read, stored, and reviewed by the state and/or corporate apparatus, I tend to think repressive forces are fine with these devices in our hands. There are print, video, and music (though not punk music) reviews. Peter Kuper has a two-page spread of artwork; P.L. Wilson has a piece on the technology level of the early 20th century; Victoria Law writes on women in prison; and the 200th anniversary of the Luddite rebellion is celebrated with a critical examination. This magazine tends to cover a broad swath of relevant material, and is worth a look-through if you are not already familiar. This is an ad-free publication. (JM)
PO Box 201016 / Ferndale, MI 48220 / www.fifthestate.org / fe@fifthestate.org

FIX MY HEAD #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 22 pgs
There are times when identity politics can fail us. In this case it mostly fails to captivate my interests. *FMH* is a collection of mostly interviews with women-identified people in the global punk/hardcore community. There is a good swath of interesting and good band members interviewed: Megan from Punch, Christine from Deathrats, Meghan from Ampere, and *MRR*'s own Byrony from Good Throb and plenty more that I'm less familiar with. However, the interviews themselves are formulaic, redundant, and rather uninspired. It strikes me as though the questions were all written a head of time, list style, and then delivered electronically. This is a terrible way to interview people. I wonder if I'm being harshly critical because I imagine that I *am* this magazine's target audience: a woman in punk—not to mention queer, poor, and ugly (all those terrible burdens, too). But this mag reads like a 101 for someone who lives outside of that reality. The author, Vo, sprinkles these interviews with some more personal takes on being punk and a person of color. They mostly read as listed tirades. That sounds like another slam but they are really good and well thought out and *very* fiercely delivered. The zine is capped off by an interview with the editor about being involved with efforts for community accountability to sexual violence done by Transformative Justice, EU. While I have very different views about the effectiveness of these tactics it's inspiring nonetheless. (EC)
spelt@live.co.uk

GENERAL SPEECH #3 / free or trade only
8 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
I'm so glad that this zine is "free or trade only" as physical trading in the punk scene is an important part of our culture which has not yet been killed by the internet. With much resistance, this fellow luddite recently switched to using a computer to type this zine out. Main features in this issue are The Decay from Switzerland and Bellicose Minds from Portland. The Decay interview is done really well with Pablo talking about about punk and their band in 1980s Switzerland in a humble way that does not sound grossly nostalgic. The interview with Nick of Bellicose Minds gives great insight into the Portland punk scene and the band itself. Tom's newly released LPs and 7"s are filled with sick current names like Bloodkrow Butcher and Criaturas—to give you some insight into which punk his musical leanings may lie. Overall, Tom is up on his old punk and up on the newest punk and has a real hunger to hear more, which shows in these pages. *General Speech* is a perfect, well laid out, easy to read dose of punk without hearing loss. His want list is included and he is an avid tape collector—I want the Japanese first version of the Gai Damnation demo, as well—so get at us. (AE)
2964 Winter Garden, Unit D / Lexington, KY 40517

GET LOST #2/ $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 34 pgs
I feel like there's such a push these days in zines to cover the "big stories," interviewing the band that's about to be signed to Kill Rock Stars, or photographing the show that everyone attended, last Friday. In light of all this, the amazing stuff that you and your friends are doing, the stuff that takes up most of your daily life, is glazed over. It's important to document our own stories and what we see going on around us because, more often than not, those are the voices that are left out of the historical record. Louis Pacheco, the brain behind *Get Lost*, seems to understand this. His zine serves as a document of good times, a representation of the everyday happenings of the skate, BMX, rollerblading scene of Texas border town, Laredo. This zine mostly comprises photographs of Louis' friends skating, hanging out under freeway overpasses, doing graffiti tags, and dodging the cops, with some cool variation in angles, and sequential, shot by shot photo displays. There's even a short, "get up and go" styled interview with local band, Party Mouf, that concludes the publication. Oh yeah, and to top it all off, there's chicken scrawl doodles of aliens, bleeding eyeballs, tornadoes, and boom boxes on every inch of paper that hasn't already been over-run with photographs. A perfect record of a particular time, place, and state of mind! (KR)
Louis Pacheco / 1706 Lowry Rd./ Laredo, TX 78045

THE GREATEST CITY IN THE WORLD #2 / **SHIT SHEET** #3 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 36 pgs
This split zine features two intensely musical fanzines, mostly comprising band interviews, straight outta Brooklyn and Denver, Colorado. *The Greatest City in the World* originally set out to just feature bands from New York City, hence the title, but, within this issue, the author has decided to broaden his horizons and feature bands outside of his favorite city, which I think was a good idea. This issue features interviews with: Milk Music, DOS, Night Birds, and Avon Ladies. The interviews all seem to follow a strategically formulaic outline, starting off by asking everyone their names, then, asking a silly, pointless question, like, "What kind of spoons do you eat cereal with," maybe to break the ice, then, eventually, getting into the previously planned out questions of the interview. It's funny because, after the silly question was asked, the conversation would either devolve into absolute ridiculousness (rants on *Seinfeld* episodes, crude sexual innuendos, et cetera), or progress in a traditional sense, depending how seriously the band wanted to answer questions. My favorite part of the zine was the interview with Milk Music because I really like that band and

was unaware of the blatant, psychedelic tendencies. (They play hacky-sack, listen to David Crosby, and refer to life as "a cosmic journey," whoa!) Also featured in this issue is a weird story featuring the Seinfeld characters, delicious recipes, and a cool opinion-piece about the author's take on Occupy Wall Street. On the flip side is *Shit Sheet*, which features interviews with Leatherface and Negative Degree. *Shit Sheet* starts out with a very confusing, stream of consciousness rant about how the author really likes Bob Mould, bouncing around the corners of his mind, covering everything from his experience living in a college dorm, to his old job at the Jewish Community Center. I'm still kind of baffled as to what the point of it all was. The interviews tended to be pretty cool. However, I feel like the Leatherface interview may have stretched on a bit too long and could've benefited from some editing. Overall, a fun read. (KR)
175 South 4th Street #4 / Brooklyn, NY 11211

I REMEMBER HALLOWEEN #7 / (email for price)
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
I Remember Halloween is a display of devotion to the world of hardcore by a lone editor who seems to find himself in that common predicament we all struggle with—watching so many people come and go within a movement that is held so dear to the heart. But what should he do then, sit around and lament? Fuck that. Instead, he interviews hardcore bands from all over the Philippines and the rest of the world and puts out a zine and does something constructive! This issue features the great Boston band, Duress, as well as regional bands Caitlyn Baily, Play, and No! My favorite part of this "nicely copied toilet rag"—as the editor lovingly labels this zine—is the write up on his relatively new-found love for vinyl records and hitting up record stores in Quezon City. There are a few pages of reviews and some photos to complete the issue. Wanna see what's going down with hardcore in the Philippines? This guy's down for trading, so hit him up. (BG)
Dane Cortes / PO Box 1504 / Quezon City CPO / 1155 Q.C. / Philippines /
irememberhalloween@gmail.com

JERK STORE #10 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 30 pgs
Unremarkable half-pager out of Australia. There are times when enthusiasm can make up for lackluster subject matter, but even the description of the author's own fandom in his long-winded intro (music zine writers: no one cares how long it's been since your last issue or why this was so) doesn't make up for it. His interviews with It's Alive Records, Turkish Techno, and Hell Money (who came up with these names?) are generic and serve more as promos than anything. I can't blame his trip to the US for being overly touristy, as from what I understand, there exists a morbid fascination with the aspects of mainstream United States culture by those from other countries that see how ridiculous a lot of "real America" really is—hamburgers the size of your ass, and so forth. But his descriptions of things just, um, lack description and make for a boring read. Strangely enough, the record/demo/zine reviews that end this zine exhibit some of his best, most descriptive writing. The layout is decent, especially for being printed, but please lose the rip-off *Cometbus* title font. (DG)
PO Box 284 / Maylands, Wa 6931 / Australia / www.jerkstore.bigcartel.com

LAST NIGHT AT THE CASINO Jan 2012 / $3 ppd
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
I give my sociology students an assignment to go out and observe life and social interaction and then write about it in a journal format. This amusing little zine pretty much does exactly that. After having recently acquired a position as a dealer in a casino, the editor of this miniature DIY zine decided to journal about the somewhat strange and surreal world of casinos. I kicked back on the couch and read this thing cover to cover, and I have to say that the author does a good job making his brief anecdotes descriptive and readable. I think casinos are fucking weird places and I couldn't really imagine being immersed in that culture all day and night (you can't even tell time in those windowless, smoke-filled joints). How crazy would it be to work there? Well, *Last Night at the Casino* offers a tantalizing glimpse of that bizarre world, and makes for a worthwhile 20 minutes of your time. Check this out! (BG)
c/o Billy / 197 B Camino del Pueblo / Bernalillo, NM 87004 / iknowbilly@gmail.com

LATERDAZE #7 / free or trade or SASE
8.5x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
Here we have the "Fight Against Monotony" issue! The general theme ties a lot of ideas together but I think the outro says it perfectly: "You don't have to be a writer to write, just like you don't have to be a musician to play in a punk band. Titles are worthless; what really matters is initiative." Wow. The point is that boredom can really suck your fucking life away and he is reminding us (by mostly reminding himself) that keeping busy is really important. I always like checking out this zine, it is reflective and encouraging, modest and intuitive. I feel like I am hearing from an old friend who is always thinking about such a vast array of subjects it is hard to tell how he could ever be bored in the first place. (JB)
Keith / 734 30th St. / Oakland, CA 94609 / theheist@rock.com

LOOSE LEAF #3 /$2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16 pgs
The author—Matthew Y—admits that his writing has no real "cohesion and no real depth"; he's totally right. What he presents are a few pages of brief thoughts, reflections and anecdotes none of which, unfortunately, are of any substance or interest. Reading *Loose Leaf* is akin to reading a transcript of the small talk of strangers in an elevator, the words are there but it's unclear why. It could be an editing issue and future issues might better showcase the writer's apparent skills but within this issue, they aren't given an opportunity. (CR)
PO Box 220824 / Murfreesboro, TN 37133
mylooseleaf@gmail.com

MORE NOISE #8 / **TORTURA Y MIERDA** #6 /
6 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
I scored this month! So here we have the ever famous *More Noise* zine creation of one Tony Gunnarsson with letters, interviews with the Swindles, Sun Children Sun (whose demo kicks fucking ass), a piece on Deathcharge and a shit ton of music and zine reviews. If you are not familiar with the style of this zine, it's cut and paste mayhem covering noisy international deconstructed ugly punk. Both interviews in here are great and both Japanese bands discuss serious topics such as the nuclear disaster to the less intense such as their love of pizza. Tony's a good writer and his interview style rules. On the flip, we have *Tortura Y Mierda* zine! This side is in Spanish, which for those of you smart or lucky enough to be Spanish / English bilingual, it's no problem. There are interviews with Tony of *More Noise* zine, Thomas of *Evil Minded* zine, Teo of, among many amazing zines, *Fanzine Miguel*, photographer Mattin, and Guillem from Destino Final about his artwork. The interviews here are great and the author of this zine knows how to get a good conversation going, but more importantly he can step back and let the ideas from the interviewees flow freely. This is a good split zine. Recommended. (MB)
slobodanburgher@gmail.com

POSITIVE CREED #12 / 50p (plus S.A.E.)
8.25 x 11.75 – copied – 22 pgs
After a six-year hiatus, this cool DIY punk zine out of the UK makes a welcome comeback with Sham 69, TV Smith and GBH interviews that serve to repent for the long absence. I don't know for sure, but the dialogues appear to be done through the mail or something, but they are still pretty compelling for anyone interested in these bands. All three guitarists (Smith, Dave Parsons from Sham and Jock from GBH) dive into the past a little and talk about the early days, but all of them stay relevant and current as well by keeping their bands together and creating new music. I seriously stopped caring about most of these groups years ago, but after reading these pages my interest has somewhat revived. Jock talks about the metal years of GBH being sort of a whim of the times (those were the days that certainly lost me as a fan) and Parsons talks about his fascination with Eddie Cochran, which had me up and spinning the *Tell Us the Truth* LP as a result. And TV Smith? Have you heard his more recent solo stuff? It fucking rules! I'm always psyched to read what he has to say about past or present days. There's also a festival journal type of thing, a ton of reviews, and lots of cut and pasted photos and graphics to be found within these stapled pages, making it worth writing to him and checking out a copy. (BG)
c/o Rob / PO Box 777 / Exeter, EX1 9TU / UK / robstone1977@gmail.com

PROBLEMS, DUDE / $5
8.5 x 10 – copied – 37 pgs
This is real incredible. A zine that's more akin to a piece of art rather than a simple carrier of information. Thick paper, hand-bound, a big stack of one-panel illustrations. Terrifying blobby drawings that convey just enough human form that you can play along with all the mess of bullshit that is daily existence. A comic in the sense that every page has some amount of dialogue written on it. I showed this to a friend of mine remarking that I found it funny, but as I looked at the pages with her they suddenly seemed incredibly dark and fucked. What I mean is that some of these are really funny, one panel features a drawing of two people on a tandem bike that says "dude fuck it, right?" but then a couple panels later the drawing has a face obscured by bottles that says "I should have smashed a bottle on your head". It's horrifying and chuckle worthy at the same time because it falls deeply into the pocket of "funny 'cuz it's true." Pages and pages of grumbled confessions, jokes about dumpster diving and free boxes, unrequited crushes, betrayal, free love, fucked-up dudes, rape, the darkness that we try to deny exists, and the pain and pains of belonging to "punk rock subculture." Super relatable and mega cathartic. It feels lifted from memory, the drawings somehow akin to the horrors found in the illustrations of those *Scary Stories To Tell In The Dark* books (remember those?) and so many exact thoughts I've had before. Intensely excellent. (MM)
Sarah Sequoia / Plaguebarge@gmail.com

RAGING PELICAN No. 3 / free
11 x 14 – printed – 28 pgs
The Gulf Coast is home to some of the most tangible effects of corporate greed that can be seen in the United States. This is a radical newspaper from that region and this issue centers mostly on the Occupy movement. Mainly consisting of poetry and essays, this covers history, racism, sexism, solidarity, the uselessness of permitted protest and so on and so forth. Something that was really rad about this was the specific effort to look at the movement

through a regional lens and then take efforts in regionalizing the movement. It stumbled into hints of smugness with almost a macho flair here and there, but for the most part it was really good. (MM)
www.ragingpelican.com

RESISTANCE: ANARCHIST PAPER No. 137 / Free or Donation
8.5 x 11 – printed – 12 pgs
This appears to be the efforts of the *Anarchist Federation* in the UK. The collective is a part of the larger International of Anarchist Federations. It's a newsletter of efforts by anarchists around the UK and Europe. Buzzwords include: Austerity, Direct Action, Greece, Prisoner Support and more. There's a large type and it's over all really accessible and easy to read. This is reporting only, no analysis or critique. Simple design and black and white. Kind of boring but a good method for distributing agit prop at a rally. (EC)
BM Anarfed / London, WC1N 3XX / England / www.afed.org.uk

ROCHESTER TEEN SET OUTSTIDER #17 / $1 PPD / $2 International / Trades
5.5 x 4 – copied – 36 pgs
The few issues of this zine I reviewed last month firmly impressed me as clever works of admiration for the local fringe scene in Rochester, written with a flare for the tongue-in-cheek by self-aware teens for self-aware teens. This issue covers such topics as local wrestlers, the toils of pizza delivery, the Teen Set taxi service and Fonzie. There is a piece on the 64 punks in Indonesia incarcerated and indoctrinated by the government which asserts that they should be grateful for the free haircut. The piece is sarcastic, of course, but I expected an equally clever take on the subject from Teen Set's esteemed editors that wasn't so callous. This being my only complaint, and perhaps a hyper-sensitive one at that, I declare this issue another fine offering from these Rochester miscreants. (SL)
W. Carroll / 23 Woodlawn St. / Rochester, NY 14607
www.rochesterteensetoutsider.com / rochesterteenset@hotmail.com

SHORT FAST & LOUD #25 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 54 pgs
The content, layout, features, and even columnists of *Short Fast & Loud* have changed little over the course of its ten-plus year existence, so if you picked up an issue in 2003 or 2007, it's not gonna be too dissimilar from this one. However, the fact that Jeff and Athena have kept it going while the faces and trends in DIY hardcore in general has continually shifted around them over the same time period is notable, and I've always liked that this zine seems to truly give every band a chance. This issue has interviews with Yacopsæ and Suffering Mind, along with the usual features (Mosh of Ass, Gimme Five, reviews where the reviewers of individual records are not named, etc.), all of which regularly hold my attention. (DG)
sixweeksrecords.com

THE SIMPLE HISTORY SERIES: THE CONGO #9 / $4
4 x 5.5 – printed – 53 pgs
The efforts of this series of zines are both well appreciated and much needed. It is absolutely necessary to supplement the understanding of history taught in school and Wikipedia isn't going to cut it. When we look at the concentration of power and the dissemination of oppression it's instructive to look into our histories and see both how repression was administered in the past and how resistance was fomented and ultimately defeated. This zine traces the Congo, and more specifically the struggle between the colonizers and the diverse African peoples that comprised the artificially created nation of the Congo. The text continues through the partition era, independence from Belgium, the movement headed by Lumumba and the exploitive rule of US-backed-dictator Mobutu. It might be a wise idea to being educating ourselves on the histories that have been and continue to be obfuscated as we consider what kind of a future we may want. (CR)
Microcosm Publishing / 636 SE 11th Ave / Portland, OR 97214 / www.microcosmpublishing.com

THE SIMPLE HISTORY SERIES: HAWAII #5 / $4 PPD
5.5 x 4 – printed – 36 pgs
This is the latest in a series that provides a short history of a broad subject, with contributions from teenage students. The tone is similar to a high-school history text book, and the information is about as illuminating. Peppered with simple, unobtrusive graphics throughout, the entire zine even resembles a textbook. Basically, we are given a miniaturized textbook, without any remotely subversive perspective or aesthetic twist as you might expect from a zine. (SL)
Microcosm Publishing

THE SIMPLE HISTORY SERIES: THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR #4 / $3
4 x 5 – copied – 48 pgs
I know almost nothing about the Spanish Civil War, so I'm not in a position to give this project a real critical review. But for someone like me, this is an accessible and nuanced look at this much-talked about event. Just from reading this, I am interested in others in the series. I think it's worth $3. (JM)
Microcosm Publishing

SLINGSHOT #10 / $1 ppd, Free to prisoners, Trades welcome
11.5 x 17.5 – printed – 16pgs
The Occupy Movement is the main focus of this newest installment of Berkeley's long-running political zine. There's articles about the upcoming General Strike on May 1st, the wide array of art surrounding the movement, and one about how even in a supposed democratic radical movement, there are still people involved who lust for power. Aside from all the Occupy-related material, there are some zine reviews, a piece questioning the true intent of the NDAA, and an excellent biographical article about the true value of a dollar. Pick up a copy and keep yourself informed. (KM)
Slingshot.tao.ca

SMILE, HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE! #15 / $4 + shipping
5.75 x 8.75 – copied – 72pgs
I'm stoked that another edition of this collaborative zine has found its way to me. Once again, most of the pieces are non-fiction, but there are also numerous poems littered throughout this issue. Though not all the stories related to life in Mobtown piqued my interest, the writing is excellent across the board, and the tales that are memorable more than make up for the mundane ones. Highlights from this issue include: A man's horrifying journey through The National Museum of Dentistry, a night in the life of a bouncer that began with him chasing Ted Nugent into the city streets and ended in a holding cell, and a drug-addled couple's violent and unusual last evening together. This is a truly fantastic zine. I'm a cynical person by nature and rarely do I think I'm missing out on anything by no longer living in Maryland, but reading the honest and endearing chronicles of city life in *Smile, Hon* makes me think I left some things unexplored and perhaps there's more to Baltimore than I cared to experience before I left the East Coast. In other words, you should read this zine. (KM)
www.eightstonepress.com

SPARE CHANGE #21 / $2
7.5x5.5 – 36 pgs – copied
Rad, traditional perzine, with stories about being a wild Chattanooga punk rocker drinking herbal energy drinks, smoking, losing friends to drugs and making music and falling in love. Is Thomas a region rocker? I am not sure what exactly makes something region rock, like if pressed I could not define it in any sort of satisfactory manner, though I know what it is and who likes it that volunteers at *MRR*. I feel like if you are into the region rock existence, if you have hitch hiked to a punk show at a farm, if you have a Hickey patch on the butt of your jeans, this is your publication! But you will also enjoy it if you like reading entertaining yet sometimes melancholy ramblings of a dude punker from Tennessee. (LG)
PO Box 6023 / Chattanooga, TN 37401

STATEWATCH Volume 21 no 3 / Subscription available
8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs
For all you hardcore left-wingers out there who care about "monitoring the state and civil liberties in Europe," this quarterly publication is for you. This issue has articles covering the EU's response to unrest in North Africa to a dissertation on police forces across Europe using social media to monitor its citizens. This is all written in an extremely dense, academic form with footnotes. I imagine most of the people writing this are involved with a university and have a very intellectual knowledge of politics and the powers that be in Europe. Hopefully, this knowledge can help push us into direct action instead of writing footnotes about it. (AE)
PO Box 1516 / London N16 0EW / UK

THE STOWAWAYS #5 January 2011 / $1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
Complete with show and record reviews, Media Blitz tour journal, letter section, and an interview with Creatures. Christopher accepts tapes, records, and CD for review, so feel free to send them in. Show reviews consist of musings about how a band's "drum set really sucks" or a venue being "the lamest frat boy college bar." My recommendation would be to talk more about the music versus how dumb you think a band's name is… but on the flip side, the music reviews are spot on. There is a heavy focus on mundane details like the aforementioned from the show reviews, but the reviews give a clear picture of what a record will sound like. I understand this zine is on the newer side, so keep it up. (AE)
Christopher Gordon / 5082 Vendover Road / Yorba Linda, CA 926886

SUBJECT #2 / $3.50 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This zine features interviews with GG King, B-Lines, Foreign Objects and Mallwalkers, with a tasteful cut-n-paste format and no fluff. Judging by the sharp, thoughtful questions, the interviewer has obviously selected bands that he is particularly fond of and whose records he has spent a considerable amount of time with. Although the questions are usually elaborate, a sense of humor is maintained and the responses seem to be edited tightly. Lengthy Q&A generica is an unfortunate blight upon fanzines, so it's refreshing to encounter a new

zine that defies the trend. Given the excellent questions and editing, it seems that the coordinator should be able to articulate some interesting record reviews or a column, and I look forward to future issues in which he asserts the sharp writing skills that are alluded to here. (SL)
23 Manchester Pl. / Buffalo, NY 14213 / turnuptuneout@hotmail.com

SUSPECT DEVICE #53 / Free in UK / Email for international
8.5 x 11 – copied – 38 pgs
The latest issue of this long-running UK punk fanzine features the breadth of subjects we have come to expect from the rag, with columns, interviews, reviews and more unusual features like a collection of reader submitted stories about their first punk shows. The initial columns and news section is pretty bleak, what with all the news being about dead punks and most of the columns focused on aging within the punk scene. This is a very relevant topic to many punks, but here the subject is tread pretty heavily. Of notable exception is a column about one writer's recent trip to California. What is bizarre to him about Californian culture won't quite resonate with anyone who lives in the United States, but his observations are amusing nonetheless. His chagrin over BART's limited schedule which renders trans-bay concert attending nearly impossible is shared by many. Martin Sorrondeguy's interview is certainly a highlight, as is the extensive record review section. Given that there have been 53 issues of *SD* now, it would seem likely that the layout would offer a little more aesthetic pleasure, but it's a little simplistic and even difficult to read at times. (SL)
2 Pine Close / Asmurst / Hampshire / S040 7BU / UK / www.suspectdevicezine.co.uk

SWEET SUMMER #? / $4
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
Funny, I was expecting a bunch of summer stories and it starts out with winter and turns abruptly into fall. I think it is about summer, conceptually, the time when we realize our truest fun potential and move a mile a minute to make the most of the bliss in wearing as little clothing as possible. Not sure because this zine is based in Minneapolis and I am projecting my notions of *actual* weather on it from way out here in 56° California February. Regardless of anything naming-identified, *Sweet Summer* is a comic about childhood adventure poisoned by betrayal, stories of dealing with deaths both timely and untimely, a total celebration of hobo lifestyle on trains and boats, and like all the best stuff in life, leaves you wanting more. I know I've found a kindred spirit when someone describes tears with "sodium chloride." (JB)
Robnoxious / 2504 16th Ave. S. / Minneapolis, MN 55404 / robotearl@gmail.com

TAKING THE LANE: OUR BODIES, OUR BIKES #5 / $5
6.5 x 4.25 – printed – 42 pgs
Despite the fact that it looks and reads like the liner notes of a *Portlandia* DVD, Elly Blue's managed to drum up enough interest (and kickstarter funds…) for a fifth volume of this series focusing on women in cycling. I mean, I get it—I'm a lady and a huge nerd who has built several bikes up from scratch and nonetheless deals with regular dismissiveness from dudes with half my experience and twice my budget. I've spent entire commutes ogling the stems, cranksets and curious gear ratios of my fellow BART travelers. I'm a stubborn jock who grumbles at the prospect of walking anywhere further than a block away, and yet I groaned, "Oh god, not again!" when I pulled this one out of the envelope. In "Our Bodies, Our Bikes", you'll find a few useful tips about riding technique and finding comfortable gear for female bodies. You'll also find an anonymous contributor who identifies as "bikesexual," a tale of hauling ass to the birthing center on a bike, and a thrilling anecdote about cumming while riding downhill really fast. I know I'm supposed to gather a sense of empowerment and camaraderie from my fellow lady cyclists, but I'm again left feeling embarrassed for everyone involved and paranoid that someone may mistake me for a fan. (FF)
Elly Blue / 3827 SE Lincoln / Portland OR 97214 / elly@takingthelane.com

TRUST #151 / 2.50 EURO
8.5 x 12.5 – printed – 64 pgs
Newest issue of this professional, long-running German zine. The writing is entirely in German, and there aren't many photos, so I can't tell you much about this issue. It looks great though; everything is in black and white and laid out with typical German precision. What I can tell you is that there are interviews with Family Man, Pascow, Fanzui Xiangfa, Wojczech and Liturgy. There are also some live shots of Terrible Feelings and a ton of record and zine reviews. I'd write more, but it's beer week here in San Francisco and there are many exotic ales I've yet to try. Germans definitely love beer, so I think they'll understand. (KM)
www.trust-zine.de

TRUST #152 / 2.50 Euros
12 x 7.5 – printed – 64 pgs
Trust fanzine is the second oldest running punk fanzine in the world to *Maximumrocknroll*, I believe. Go international DIY in print! It is very well laid out with slick pages and a ton of reviews and interviews, just like the magazine you hold right now in your newsprint-stained hands. But, it is in German! Headlining in this issue: Planks, Clusterbomb, Life Ends, Die Fremden, and Yage. Non-German readers can still get the goods to translate at www.trust-zine.de (AE)
Dolf Sibiu / PO Box 11 07 62 / 28 087 / Bremen / Germany

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 25, #1 / $16 annually, free to prisoners
17 x 11.5 – printed – 8 pgs
This issue not only highlights the upcoming May 1st general strike but also features pieces on immigration, appropriation and excerpts from an interview with Russell Maroon Shoatz. It's worthwhile. (MM)
Anti Racist Action Publisher / www.antiracistaction.org

WHEN LANGUAGE RUNS DRY: A ZINE FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC PAIN AND THEIR ALLIES #4 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 46 pgs
As someone with a chronic medical condition whose needs are often not taken into consideration by radicals with big plans for people they didn't consult and anarchists whose big mouths contrast with their narrow perspectives, I'm extremely grateful to see an increasing number of punks and politically radical folks speaking about their experiences dealing with illness, disability, and the medical industrial complex, in fanzines and otherwise. This is my first exposure to this zine, but it collects testimonials, prose, and poetry from folks living with chronic pain, that offers a glimpse into their short and long-term struggles, and begins with an extremely useful "harm reduction guide to self-care" that emphasizes flexibility and positive reinforcement when attempting to implement and stick to a self-care plan, rather than beating oneself up for not always being able to follow a regiment. Although my condition is relatively mild and doesn't involve pain, I could still empathize with stories of waiting rooms, the despair that comes with a new diagnosis or development, the inability to make people understand what you're going through because it's invisible, and so forth. Some of the stories have happier endings than others, but I truly hope that this zine continues to publish for a long time, and that similar ones pop up as well. (DG)
www.chronicpainzine.blogspot.com

XEROXGARPHY DEBT #29
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 67 pgs
This is weird. I'm doing a review of a zine that reviews other zines. This whole situation is just messy. I guess the idea of something as exclusive as this, a zine that just writes of the logistics and politics of zine writing, and then, solely focusing on reviewing zines, just seems kind of limiting and slightly boring to me. The publication starts off by listing a bunch of "rules to zinedom", pigeon-holing people who make zines and slowly kicking people out of their cool kids club. "A blog is not a zine", as they say. Whatever, this shit just comes off as bitter and, ultimately, pretty silly. These people need to stop worrying so much about what is and isn't a zine—as long as people are creating something and expressing themselves, why should it matter? As far as the reviews go, they're all unbelievably positive. I guess they have a policy of only printing "good reviews." So, as a result, we get one glowing review after another! It's really touching that the folks at *Xeroxgraphy Debt* are so kind, but it sure makes for a predictable and slightly nauseating reading experience. (KR)
Davida Gypsy Breier / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212

XEROXGRAPHY DEBT #30
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 63 pgs
More of the same stuff. Zine reviews and writing about writing zines. I suppose this publication is doing good things, in terms of establishing connections and getting the word out about up and coming zines. It just seems a bit excessive. But, if you're looking for someone, besides *MRR*, to review your zine, look no further. (KR)
Davida Gypsy Breier / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212

ZINE WORLD #30.5 / $4 US ($7 world)
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
Zine World, Zine World, Party On, Excellent. I am grateful that *Zine World* has a place offline, thus a place in my heart. Been ruminating lately on the notion of recursive entities, and surely a zine that is about other zines is a perfect example. You can look to *ZW* for the latest news, upcoming events, but mainly as a huge listing and reviewing of what's what in the underground. Things like this need to exist in paper form, for a lot of reasons but I'll list a couple here: this publication provides information that needs to have the permanence of tangibility… where it can lay around in someone's bathroom or on the coffee table at the infoshop, where people can run across it without searching it out, as well as being available to those who still for whatever reason are not dialed in with a computer. Sure addresses change, some subjects become less relevant as time passes and the trees could use a break (amen!) but I believe this resource fills a necessary role in our culture. I have been keeping it in my bag and just reading different reviews here and there, waiting for the train or when I need a time-out from interacting with others. There are enough differing opinions represented in the reviewing and I just smile at the thought that enough people care about zines (still) that we can have a zine dedicated to informing people about zines. (JB)
PO Box 3556 / Portland, OR 97208 / www.undergroundpress.org

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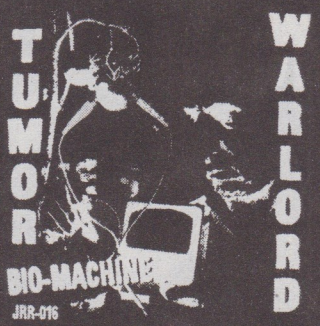

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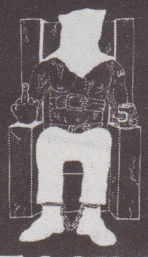

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